

REFUTING AL-UDHR BI'L
JAHL (THE EXCUSE OF
IGNORANCE) IN MAJOR
SHIRK: 100 QURANIC
VERSES



AQIDAT AL-TAWHID

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, the One, the Subduer, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who merges the night into the day. He Who revealed to His servant the Book, establishing thereby the proof and cutting off all excuses. Glory be to Him, the Mighty, the One before Whose Might every arrogant tyrant is humbled, and to Whose Oneness the hands and eyes of the righteous are raised in supplication. Praise be to Him, a praise befitting His Noble Countenance and His Great Authority, a praise that leaves the minds bewildered in His Greatness, a praise for Whom the birds sing praises and before Whose Awe the righteous fear.

I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful, the Unique in His Divinity and His Decree, the One nothing is like unto, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger, the truthful, the trustworthy, sent as a mercy to the worlds, a guide to the righteous, and a cause of grief for the disbelievers. He established the proof, illuminated the path, established the argument, and clarified the evidence against creation altogether. He left us upon a clear path, a manifest truth.

To proceed:

This bitter reality has led me to recall a profound statement that has deeply resonated with me. It was said by one of the scholars of this Ummah, Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, who said:

كتاب الله عز وجل العزيز لا يأتيه الباطل من بين يديه، ولا من خلفه، تنزيل من حكيم حميد، من ابتغى العلم في غيره أضله الله، ومن ولي هذا الأمر من جبار فحكم بغيره قصمه الله، وهو النور المبين، والذكر الحكيم، والصراط المستقيم اهـ

"The Book of Allah contains news of those before you, tidings of those after you, and the judgment of matters between you. It is the decisive word, not a thing to be taken lightly. It is that by which desires are not led astray, nor are the scholars ever satiated with it. It does not become worn out by repetition, nor do its wonders cease. Whoever among the tyrants abandons it, Allah will crush him. Whoever seeks guidance from other than it, Allah will lead him astray. It is the strong rope of Allah, the wise reminder, and the straight path."

Contemplate his words: **"Whoever seeks guidance other than from Allah, Allah will misguide him."** This is a frightening statement for those who understand it. It explains the reason for the misguidance of most people from the path of truth. For most people, both learned and ignorant, when they are confused about a matter of their religion, they turn to numerous books, articles, and individuals in search of truth amidst the darkness of their confusion. The Quran becomes the last thing that comes to their mind, either as a blessing or as a last resort. Tell me, by Allah, how can Allah not misguide them in this state, as you can see?

Among the issues where both the common and the elite go astray, seeking guidance from sources other than the Book of their Lord, is the issue of excusing oneself with ignorance. Is a person excused if their sin is committed out of ignorance?

We must be certain that the verses in the Quran that shed light on the truth in such crucial matters are sufficient, as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: **"He who does not find sufficiency in the Quran is not of us"** Meaning, it suffices him from needing anything else. If you are still in doubt about this matter and are not entirely certain about the truth, and you see much disagreement among scholars, which may compel you to refer back to the Book of Allah after despairing of the words of people, then supplicate to Allah to show you the truth in His Book. Entrust your affair to Him and open the Quran with me, with the blessings of Allah. Let us begin to read the story of the one who lost his ring in the dirt.

I have helped you by gathering the words of the predecessors in its interpretation so that you do not say, "Perhaps I am mistaken" in understanding this vast number of verses indicating that ignorance is not an excuse. Believe me, you will say in amazement: **"A person may not see a faint star in the sky, but how can the sun be hidden from him in broad daylight?"**

And here, you will learn our stance and what Yazid bin Tamim (may Allah have mercy on him) meant when he said: **"Whoever is not straightened by the Quran and death, then even if mountains were to crumble before him, he would not be straightened."** This is the reality, and there is no escape from Allah.

All praise is to Allah, who has guided me to this.

Do not be surprised, dear reader, if I tell you that I have chosen for you a hundred verses from among the many I have encountered. I am not exaggerating in this, but rather I have left many and taken what the obstinate cannot argue with, nor can they find any possibility of it deviating from the meaning, even remotely. So here is the truth that the hands of tyranny have concealed from sight.

Here are a hundred clear verses before you, so approach them with contemplation and reflection upon the guidance they contain. These are pages that I pray Allah will benefit their writer, reader, and observer. And with Allah is all success.

Chapter: The Styles of the Quran in Explaining the Unacceptability of Ignorance as an Excuse in Matters of Religion and Faith

The Quran utilizes diverse styles in condemning ignorance, warning against its consequences, and declaring it unacceptable as an excuse in matters of religion and faith. This is evident in numerous verses and various expressions. Here's an explanation:

Section: At times Quran commands seeking refuge from ignorance or disavowing it due to its potential consequences. As Allah says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقَرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ

"And when Moses said to his people, "Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow," they said, "Do you take us in mockery?" He said, "I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant." (Al-Baqarah 2:67)

And Allah says:

قَالَ يَنْتُوحُ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنِّي أَعِظُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ

"He said, "O Noah, indeed he is not of your family; indeed, his work is not righteous. So do not ask Me about what you have no knowledge of. Indeed, I advise you lest you be among the ignorant." (Hud 11:46)

At times, the Quran prohibits following ignorant people who lack knowledge and commands turning away from them. As Allah says:

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"Then We placed you upon a clear way of the command. So follow it, and do not follow the inclinations of those who do not know." (Ash-Jathiyah 45:18)

And Allah says:

قَالَ قَدْ أُجِيبَتِ دَعْوَتُكُمَا فَاسْتَقِيمَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعَانِ سَبِيلَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"He said, "Your supplication has been answered. So stand firm and do not follow the way of those who do not know." (Yunus 10:89)

And Allah says:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

"Take to forgiveness and command what is right and turn away from the ignorant." (Al-A'raf 7:199)

At times, the Quran informs us that the polytheists are in a state of doubt and uncertainty, and this stems from their ignorance. As Allah says:

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ فَآخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مُرِيبٍ

"And We certainly gave Moses the Book, but it was disputed. And had it not been for a word that preceded from your Lord, it would have been decided between them. And indeed, they are in doubt about it, a great doubt." (Hud 11:110)

And Allah says:

وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُورِثُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مُرِيبٍ

"...And indeed, those who were given the Scripture after them are in doubt about it, a great doubt." (Ash-Shura 42:14)

أَنزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْ ذِكْرِي ۚ بَلْ لَمَّا يَدُفُّوا عَذَابَ

And His saying: {Or has the Reminder been sent down to him from among us? Nay, they are in doubt about My Reminder. Nay, they have not yet tasted My punishment.}

[I said]: This doubt leads to destruction, as Muadh (May Allah be pleased with him) said: "The doubters are doomed..." This indicates that there is no excuse for doubt.

وقال أبو بطين في كتابه الانتصار لحزب الله الموحدين (ص ٢٣) : الشاك جاهل والفقيه يذكرون في كتب الفقه حكم المرتد، وأن المسلم الذي يكفر بعد إسلامه نطقا وفعلا أو اعتقادا أو شكاً وسبب الشك الجهل . اهـ

Abu Butayn said in his book "Al-Intisar li Hizb Allah al-Muwahhidin" (p. 23): "The doubter is ignorant, and the jurists mention in the books of jurisprudence the ruling on the apostate, and that the Muslim who disbelieves after his Islam by word, deed, belief, or doubt, and the reason for doubt is ignorance." End quote.

Section: And sometimes He criticizes following suspicion that is based on ignorance and threatens with punishment for it:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ۚ ذَلِكَ ظُنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ

Which indicates that there is no excuse for it, as He says: {And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve. So woe to those who disbelieve from the Fire.} (Sad: 27)

[I said]: And these suspicions have countless types, causes, and rulings.

وَذَلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَاكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

And from that is His saying: {And that is your thought which you thought about your Lord - it has destroyed you, so you have become of the losers.} (Fussilat 41:23)

فعن جابر - رضي الله عنه قال سمعت رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - يقول قبل وفاته بثلاث : « لا يموتن أحدكم إلا وهو يحسن الظن بالله » أخرجاه وزاد ابن أبي الدنيا « فإن قوما أُرِداهم سوء ظنهم بالله فقال تبارك وتعالى { وَذَلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَاكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ } [فصلت : ٢٣]

On the authority of Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, say three days before his death: "Let none of you die except while he is having a good thought of Allah." Narrated by Muslim. And Ibn Abi Dunya (May Allah have mercy upon him) added: "For some people were destroyed by their evil thought of Allah. So the Most High said: **{And that is your thought which you thought about your Lord - it has destroyed you, so you have become of the losers.}** (Fussilat 41:23)

قال ابن القيم في مدارج السالكين (٢ / ٤٦٦ : أخبر تعالى أن إنكارهم هذه الصفة من صفاته سوء ظنهم به، وأنه هو الذي أهلكهم وقد أخبر في الطائنين به ظن السوء: "عليهم دائرة السوء و غضب الله عليهم ولعنهم وأعد لهم جهنم وساءت مصيرا " (الفتح ٥٦) ... وقال إمام الحنفاء وأهل التوحيد لقومه : إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ أُنْفِكَا إِلَهَهُ دُونَ اللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ فَمَا ظَنُّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ [الصافات ٨٥ – ٨٧]

أي فما ظنكم به أن يجازيكم وقد عبت مع غيره ؟ وما الذي ظننتم به حتى جعلتم معه شركاء ؟ أظننتم أنه محتاج إلى الشركاء والأعوان ؟ أم ظننتم أنه يخفى عليه شيء من أحوال عبادته حتى يحتاج إلى شركاء تعرفه بها كالمملوك ؟ أم ظننتم أنه لا يقدر وحده على استقلاله بتدبيرهم وقضاء حوائجهم ؟ أم هو قاس فيحتاج إلى شفعاء يستعطفونه على عبادته ؟ أم دليل فيحتاج إلى ولي يتكثر به من القلة ويتعزز به من الذلة (اهـ

Ibn al-Qayyim said in Madarij al-Salikin (2/466): "He, the Most High, informed us that their denial of this attribute is from their evil thought of Him, and that it is what destroyed them. And He has informed us about those who think evil of Him: **{Upon them is a circle of evil and the anger of Allah, and for them is the curse, and prepared for them is Hell, and evil it is as a destination.}** (Al-Fath: 60) ... And the Imam of the Hunafa and the people of Tawhid said to his people: **{When he said to his father and his people, "What do you worship?" Do you worship instead of Allah that which holds no power to benefit you or harm you? What then is your thought about the Lord of the worlds?}** [As-Saffat 37:85-87]

This means, what do you think He will do to you, having associated others with Him in worship? What made you think this way, to the point of taking partners with Him? Do you think He is in need of partners and helpers? Or do you think that something is hidden from Him regarding the affairs of His servants, so He needs partners to inform Him, like kings? Or do you think He is incapable of managing them and fulfilling their needs on His own? Or is He harsh, needing intercessors to plead with Him on behalf of His servants? Or is He insignificant, needing a guardian to increase His numbers and strengthen Him from weakness?

At times, the Quran mentions that the polytheists are lost, and the source of their misguidance is ignorance. It does not excuse them, as in the verse:

قُلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْنَا اللَّهَ كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَيْرَانِ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُوهُ إِلَىٰ الْهُدَىٰ ۖ إِنَّا قُلْنَا إِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ ۖ وَأَوْرَثْنَا لِسُلَيْمٍ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ عَلَّمِينَ

"Say, 'Shall we invoke besides Allah that which neither benefits us nor harms us, and shall we turn back on our heels after Allah has guided us, like one whom the devils have enticed [to wander] upon the earth confused, [while] he has companions inviting him to guidance, [saying], "Come to us"?' Say, 'Indeed, the guidance of Allah is guidance, and we have been commanded to submit to the Lord of the worlds.'" [Al-An'am 6:71]

قال الطبري في هذه الآية : وهذا تنبيه من الله تعالى ذكره نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم على حجته على مشركي قومه من عبدة الأوثان قال : وأما "حيران"، فإنه "فعلان" من قول القائل: "قد حار فلان في الطريق، فهو يَحَار فيه حيرة وحَيْرَانًا وحَيْرُورَة"، حيران ، يدعو المسلم 1 وذلك إذ ضل فلم يهتد للمحجة. " عن مجاهد قال " حيران"، هذا مثل ضربه الله للكافر يقول : الكافر إلى الهدى فلا يجيب" اهـ . [جامع البيان (١١/٤٥١)]

Al-Tabari said in his commentary on this verse: "This is a reminder from Allah, the Exalted, to His Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, of His argument against the polytheists of his people who worshipped idols. As for 'confused,' it is derived from the saying, 'So-and-so is confused on the road, he is wandering in it, lost and bewildered.' This is because he has gone astray and cannot find the right path." **Mujahid (May Allah have mercy upon him) said,** "Confused' is an example Allah gives for the disbeliever. He says: The disbeliever is confused. The Muslim calls him to guidance, but he does not respond." [Jami' al-Bayan (11/451)]

At other times, Allah informs us that the polytheists think they are guided, while they are ignorant of the reality of their polytheism and disbelief:

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ۝ ١٠٣ الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيَّهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا

"Say, 'Shall we inform you of the greatest losers as to [their] deeds? [Those] whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work.'" [Al-Kahf 18:103-104]

وقد بوب ابن منده لهذه الآية في كتابه التوحيد بقوله : الدليل على أن المجتهد المخطئ في معرفة الله ووحدانيته كالمعاند ثم ذكر الآية

Ibn Mundah commented on this verse in his book "Al-Tawhid" saying: "The evidence that the mistaken scholar in the knowledge of Allah and His Oneness is like the stubborn one," then he mentioned the verse.

وروى الطبري بإسناده في التفسير (١٨ / ١٢٧) عن علي ابن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه قال في هذه الآية : هم كفرة أهل الكتاب ، كان أوائلهم على حق، فأشركوا بربهم، وابتدعوا في دينهم، الذي يجتهدون في الباطل، ويحسبون أنهم على حق، ويجتهدون في الضلالة، ويحسبون أنهم على هدى فضل سعيهم في الحياة الدنيا، وهم يحسبون أنهم يحسنون صنعا ، ثم رفع صوته فقال : وما أهل النار منهم ببعيد." اهـ

Al-Tabari narrated with his chain of narration in the Tafsir (18/127) from Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, who said about this verse: "They are the disbelievers among the People of the Book. Their predecessors were upon the truth, then they associated partners with their Lord and innovated in their religion. They strive in falsehood, thinking that they are upon the truth, and they strive in misguidance, thinking that they are upon guidance. They waste their efforts in the life of this world, thinking that they are doing good." Then he raised his voice and said: "And the people of Hellfire are not far from them."

And Allah Almighty said:

فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الضَّلَالَةُ إِنَّهُمْ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنََّّهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ

{A group (of mankind) He has guided, and a group deserved to be in error; (because) surely they took the Shayatin (devils) as Auliya' (lords, protectors, helpers, allies) instead of Allah, and think that they are guided!} (Al-A'raf 7:30)

أخرج ابن أبي حاتم عن ابن عباس في قوله { كما بدأكم تعودون } قال : إن تموتوا يحسب المهتدي أنه على هدى ويحسب الغني أنه على هدى ، حتى يتبين له عند الموت وكذلك تبعثون يوم القيامة

Ibn Abi Hatim (May Allah have mercy upon him) narrated from **Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him)** regarding His saying: {As He originated you, so will you return (to Him)} that he said: "If you die, the guided one thinks that he is upon guidance, and the rich one thinks that he is upon guidance, until it becomes clear to him at death. And likewise, you will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment upon that which you were upon."

قال الطبري : يقول تعالى ذكره: إن الفريق الذي حق عليهم الضلالة، إنما ضلوا عن سبيل الله وجاروا عن قصد المحجة، باتخاذهم الشياطين نصراء من دون الله، وظهراء، جهلا منهم بخطأ ما هم عليه من ذلك، بل فعلوا ذلك وهم يظنون أنهم على هدى وحق، وأن الصواب ما أتوه وركبوا ، وهذا من أبين الدلالة على خطأ قول من زعم أن الله لا يعذب أحداً على معصية ركبها أو ضلالة، اعتقدها، إلا أن يأتيها بعد علم منه بصواب وجهها، فيركبها عناداً منه لربه فيها. لأن ذلك لو كان كذلك، لم يكن بين فريق الضلالة الذي ضلّ وهو يحسب أنه هادٍ، وفريق الهدى، فرقٌ ، وقد فرق الله بين أسمائهما وأحكامهما في هذه الآية. " اهـ

Al-Tabari said: "Allah Almighty says: 'The group upon whom misguidance is deserved, they only went astray from the path of Allah and deviated from the straight path by taking the devils as allies and protectors instead of Allah. They were ignorant of the error of that, rather they did that while thinking that they were upon guidance and truth, and that what they came up with and rode upon was correct. This is the clearest indication of the error of the saying of those who claim that Allah does not punish anyone for a sin they committed or misguidance they believed in unless it comes after knowing the truth of its opposite, so they commit it out of stubbornness to their Lord. Because if that were the case, there would be no difference between the group of misguidance who went astray while thinking they were guided, and the group of guidance. Yet, Allah has differentiated between their names and rulings in this verse."

وقال البغوي عند تفسيرها : " فيه دليل على أن الكافر الذي يظن أنه في دينه على الحق والجاد والمعانء سواء. " اهـ

Al-Baghawi said in his exegesis: "This is evidence that the disbeliever who thinks he is right in his religion, and the denier and the stubborn one are all the same."

وقال السمعاني عندها : " وفي هذا دليل على أن المستبصر بالكفر الذي يحسب أنه على الحق مثل المعانء سواء. " اهـ

Al-Sam'ani said: "This is evidence that the one who is aware of disbelief but thinks he is right is like the stubborn one."

وقال الزجاج في معاني القرآن وإعرابه (٢/٣٣١) قوله : ويحسبون أنهم مهتدون" يدل على أن قوماً ينتحلون ويزعمون أنه من كان كافراً ولا يعلم أنه كافر فليس بكافر مبطلون لأمر نحلتهن لأن الله قد أعلمنا أنهم يحسبون أنهم مهتدون ولا اختلاف بين أهل اللغة في أن الحسبان ليس تأويله غير ما يعلم من معنى حسب والدليل أن الله قد سماهم بظنهم كفره قوله تعالى " : وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ (ص) (٢٧) فأعلم أنهم بالظن كافرون وأنهم معذبون " اهـ

Al-Zajjaj said in "Ma'ani al-Quran wa I'rabuh" (2/331) regarding the verse: "**And they think they are [rightly] guided**": "This indicates that some people claim and allege that whoever is a disbeliever and does not know that he is a disbeliever is not a disbeliever. They are

nullifying the matter of their claim because Allah has informed us that they think they are guided. There is no disagreement among the people of the language that the meaning of 'thinking' is not other than what is known from the meaning of 'assumption'. The evidence is that Allah has named them disbelievers based on their assumption in His saying: **'And We did not create the heaven and the earth and that between them in play. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve, so woe to those who disbelieve from the Fire.'** (Sad: 27). So He informed us that they are disbelievers by their assumption and that they will be punished."

وقال أبو بطين في كتابه كشف الشبهتين: "وقد أخبر الله تعالى عن الكفار أنهم يفهموا فقال: (إِنَّهُمْ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ) (الأعراف: من الآية ٣٠) فبين سبحانه أنهم لم يفقهوا، فلم يعذرهم لكونهم لم يفهموا، بل صرح هذا الجنس من الكفار كما في قوله تعالى: (قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا * الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ أَلْفَهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا * أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَزْنًا) (الكهف من الآية: ١٠٣-١٠٤) الآية.

Abu Butayn said in his book "Kashf al-Shubuhah": "Allah Almighty has informed us that the disbelievers perceive, as He said: 'Indeed, they have taken the devils as Auliya' (lords, protectors, helpers, allies) besides Allah, and they think that they are [rightly] guided.' (Al-A'raf: 30). So He, Glory be to Him, clarified that they did not comprehend, so He did not excuse them for not comprehending. Rather, He explicitly stated this type of disbelievers as in His saying: **'Say, "Shall we inform you of the greatest losers as to [their] deeds? [Those] whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work." Those are the ones who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord and in [their] meeting Him, so their deeds have become worthless; and We will not assign them any weight on the Day of Resurrection.'** (Al-Kahf: 103-105).

And Allah Almighty also said:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ مِنْ سُوءِ الْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ

"And if those who wronged had all that is in the earth and the like of it with it, they would [attempt to] ransom themselves thereby from the punishment of the Day of Resurrection. But there appeared to them from Allah that which they had not taken into account." (Az-Zumar: 47)

قال مقاتل: ظهر لهم حين بعثوا ما لم يحتسبوا في الدنيا أنه نازل بهم في الآخرة.

Muqatil (May Allah have mercy upon him) said: "When they were resurrected, what they did not expect in this world appeared to them in the Hereafter."

وقال السدي: ظنوا أنها حسنات فبدت لهم سيئات، والمعنى: أنهم كانوا يتقربون إلى الله بعبادة الأصنام، فلما عوقبوا عليها بدا لهم من الله ما لم يحتسبوا. وروي أن محمد بن المنكدر جزع عند الموت، فقيل له في ذلك فقال: أخشى أن يبدو لي ما لم أحتسب".

Al-Suddi (May Allah have mercy upon him) said: "They thought they were good deeds, but they appeared to them as sins." The meaning is that they used to draw near to Allah by worshipping idols, so when they were punished for it, what they did not expect from Allah

appeared to them. It was narrated that Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir (May Allah have mercy upon him) panicked at the time of his death, so he was asked about that, and he said: "I fear that what I did not expect will appear to me."

Allah Almighty said in this regard:

وَمَنْ يَعِشْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقِضَ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ۖ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ

"And whoever is blind [in heart] to the remembrance of the Most Merciful - We appoint for him a devil, and he is to him a companion. And indeed, the devils avert them from the way [of guidance] while they think that they are [rightly] guided." [Az-Zukhruf 36-37]

قال الطبري في تفسيره (٢٠/٦٠٥) : يقول تعالى ذكره : وإن الشياطين ليصدون هؤلاء الذين يعيشون عن ذكر الله ، عن سبيل الحق ، فيزينون لهم الضلالة ، ويكرهون إليهم الإيمان بالله ، والعمل بطاعته (وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ) يقول : ويظن المشركون بالله بتحسين الشياطين لهم ما هم عليه من الضلالة ، أنهم على الحق والصواب، يخبر تعالى ذكره عنهم أنهم من الذي هم عليه من الشرك على شك وعلى غير بصيرة.

Al-Tabari said in his Tafsir (20/605): "Allah Almighty says: 'And indeed, the devils avert these who are blind to the remembrance of Allah from the path of truth, so they beautify misguidance for them and make them hate faith in Allah and acting upon His obedience.' **(while they think that they are [rightly] guided)** He says: 'And the polytheists think, due to the devils' beautification of their misguidance, that they are upon the truth and right path.' Allah Almighty informs us that they are in doubt and without insight regarding their state of polytheism."

قال ابن القيم كما في التفسير القيم (٢/٤٠) : " أخبر سبحانه ان من ابتلاه بقرينه من الشياطين وضلاله به إنما كان بسبب اعراضه وعشوه عن ذكره الذي انزله على رسوله فكان عقوبة هذا الاعراض ان قيض له شيطاناً يقارنه فيصده عن سبيل ربه وطريق فلاحه وهو يحسب انه مهتد حتى إذا وافى ربه يوم القيامة مع قرينه وعاین هلاكه وافلاسه قال يا ليت بيني وبينك بعد المشرقين فبئس القرين وكل من اعرض عن الاهتداء بالوحي الذي هو ذكر الله فلا بد ان يقول هذا يوم القيامة فإن قيل فهل لهذا عذر في ضلالة إذا كان يحسب انه على هدى كما قال تعالى ويحسبون انهم مهتدون قيل لا عذر لهذا وامثاله من الضلال الذين منشأ ضلالهم الاعراض عن الوحي الذي جاء به الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم ولو ظن انه مهتد فإنه مفرط باعراضه عن اتباع داعي الهدى فإذا ضل فإنما اتى من تفريطه واعراضه ". اهـ

Ibn al-Qayyim said, as stated in Tafsir al-Qayyim (2/40): "Allah Almighty informed us that whoever He afflicts with a companion from the devils and misguides him, it is only because of his turning away and blindness to His remembrance, which He revealed to His Messenger. So the consequence of this turning away is that He assigns to him a devil who accompanies him, averting him from the path of his Lord and the way of his success, while he thinks that he is guided, until when he meets his Lord on the Day of Resurrection with his companion and witnesses his destruction and bankruptcy, he will say, 'Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts – what an evil companion.' And whoever turns away from guidance by the revelation, which is the remembrance of Allah, will definitely say this on the Day of Resurrection. If it is said: 'Does this one have an excuse for his misguidance if he thinks that he is guided, as Allah Almighty said: (while they think that they are [rightly] guided)?' It is said: 'There is no excuse for this one and those like him among the misguided, whose misguidance stems from turning away from the revelation that the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, brought. Even if He thought that he was guided, but he was negligent by turning away from

following the call of guidance. So if he goes astray, it is only because of his negligence and turning away." End quote.

And from that is His - the Most High's - saying:

أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ دُونِي أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نُزُلًا

So those who disbelieved thought that they could take besides Me [false deities as] Auliya' (lords, protectors, helpers, allies). Indeed, We have prepared Hell for the disbelievers as a lodging. (Al-Kahf 18:102)

[I say]: These verses have clearly indicated that wrong assumptions and suspicions based on ignorance do not avail as an excuse before Allah Almighty for those who abandon Tawhid (Oneness of Allah), are ignorant of it, and do not act upon it.

At times, the Almighty informs us that the polytheists have no knowledge and that all their actions are based on ignorance, then He threatens them with punishment, indicating that their ignorance is not an excuse for them.

And there are many similar examples in the Quran, such as His saying:

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَفَهًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَحَرَّمُوا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ افْتِرَاءً عَلَى اللَّهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوا وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ

Those will have lost who killed their children in foolishness without knowledge and prohibited what Allah had provided for them, inventing falsehood about Allah. They have gone astray, and they were not guided. (Al-An'am 6:140)

قال الطبري في تفسيره (١٢/١٥٣) : فعلوا ما فعلوا من ذلك جهالة منهم بما لهم وعليهم، ونقص عقول، وضعف أحلام منهم، وقلة فهم بعاجل ضرره وأجل مكروهه ، من عظيم عقاب الله عليه لهم .

Al-Tabari said in his Tafsir (153/12): "They did what they did out of ignorance of what is for them and against them, due to their deficient intellects, weak minds, and lack of understanding of the swiftness of its harm and the inevitability of its woe, which is the immense punishment of Allah upon them."

And He also said about them:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge. Thus We have made pleasing to every community their deeds. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them about what they used to do. (Al-An'am 6:108)

وقال الطبري أيضا عن هذه الآية : " يقول تعالى ذكره لنبيه محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وللمؤمنين به ولا تسبوا الذين يدعون المشركون من دون الله من الآلهة والأنداد، فيسب المشركون الله جهلا منهم بربهم، واعتداءً بغير علم . " ثم روى عن قتادة أنه قال : "كان المسلمون يسبون أوثان الكفار فيردون ذلك عليهم، فنهاهم الله أن يستسبوا لربهم، فإنهم قوم جهلة لا علم لهم بالله" اهـ. [أنظر جامع البيان (١٢/٣٣ - ٣٤) و تفسير ابن أبي حاتم ٧٧٨٨]

Al-Tabari also said about this verse: "Allah Almighty says to His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and to the believers in him, 'Do not insult those whom the polytheists invoke besides Allah from among the idols and false deities, for the polytheists will insult Allah out of ignorance of their Lord and transgression without knowledge.'" Then he narrated from Qatadah (May Allah have mercy upon him) that he said: "The Muslims used to insult the idols of the disbelievers, so they would retaliate against them. So Allah forbade them from insulting their Lord, **for they an ignorant people who have no knowledge of Allah.**" [See Jami' al-Bayan (33/12-34) and Tafsir Ibn Abi Hatim 7788]

And Allah Almighty said:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ

{And of the people are some who dispute concerning Allah without knowledge or guidance or an enlightening Scripture} [22:8].

قال الطبري عنها : "يقول تعالى ذكره: ومن الناس من يخاصم في توحيد الله وإفراده بالألوهة بغير علم منه بما يخاصم به (ولا هُدًى) يقول: وبغير بيان معه لما يقول ولا برهان. (وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ) يقول: وبغير كتاب من الله أتاه لصحة ما يقول (منير) يقول ينير عن حجته. وإنما يقول ما يقول من الجهل ظنا منه وحسابنا. " [١٨/٥٧٣]

Al-Tabari said about it: "Allah Almighty says: And of the people are some who argue about the Oneness of Allah and His being alone in divinity without knowledge from him about what he argues about (or guidance) meaning: and without clarification with him for what he says or proof. (Or an enlightening Scripture) meaning: and without a book from Allah that came to him confirming the truth of what he says (enlightening) meaning: that clarifies his argument. **And he only says what he says out of ignorance, blindly and based on assumption.**" [573/18]

And Allah Almighty also said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رَجَالًا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَسَلُّواْ أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

{And We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed [Our message]. So ask the people of the message [i.e., former scriptures] if you do not know.} [16:43]

This verse is a clear text on the lack of excuse for the ignorant person due to his ignorance because he is commanded to ask in a state of ignorance. If he abandons what he was commanded, then he is not excused. This is why Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab used this verse as evidence for what we have said. He said in it:

" تنبيه الجاهل أنه لا يعذر لأنه يمكنه السؤال . " [مجموع المؤلفات (٥ / ٢١٢)]

"A warning to the ignorant person that he is not excused because he is able to ask."

[Majmu' al-Mualafat (5/212)]

Section: At times the Quran describes the polytheists with heedlessness, then it does not accept their excuse under any circumstances:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

This is like His saying in the verse of the covenant: {And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] - lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware."} [Al-A'raf 7:172]

And His saying also:

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

{You were heedless of this; then We removed from you your cover, so your sight, this Day, is iron [sharp].} [Al-Furqan 50:22]

And Allah Almighty said:

لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ آبَاؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَافِلُونَ

{That you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are unaware.} [Ya-Sin 36:6]

Al-Tabari said in the verse of the covenant, which is considered a fundamental Asl (foundation) in this matter:

"يقول تعالى ذكره : شهدنا عليكم أيها المقرون بأن الله ربكم كيلا تقولوا يوم القيامة: "إنا كنا عن هذا غافلين" إنا كنا لا نعلم ذلك ، وكنا في غفلة منه أو تقولوا : (إنما أشرك آبائنا من قبل وكنا ذرية من بعدهم)، اتبعنا منهاجهم (أفتهلكننا) بإشراك من أشرك من آبائنا، واتبعنا منهاجهم على جهل منا بالحق؟ ويعني بقوله: (بما فعل المبطلون)، بما فعل الذين أبطلوا في دعواهم إلهها غير الله." اهـ [جامع البيان (٢٥١ / ١٣)]

"Allah Almighty says: We made you testify, O you who acknowledge that Allah is your Lord, so that you will not say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Indeed, we were unaware of this.'" Indeed, we were unaware of that, and we were heedless of it. Or do you say, "Our forefathers associated others with Allah before, and we are merely their descendants. Will You destroy us for what the falsifiers did?" This means, "Will You destroy us for what those who falsified by their claim of having a god other than Allah did?" [Tafsir al-Tabari (13/251)]

و قال في الدر المنثور (٤/٣٦١) : " وأخرج عبد بن حميد وعبد الله بن أحمد بن حنبل في زوائد المسند والطبري وابن أبي حاتم وأبو الشيخ وابن منده في كتاب الرد على الجهمية واللائكائي وابن مردويه والبيهقي في الأسماء والصفات وابن عساكر في تاريخه عن أبي بن كعب في قوله { وإذ أخذ ربك من بني آدم من ظهورهم ذرياتهم } إلى قوله { بما فعل المبطلون } جميعاً فجعلهم أرواحاً في صورهم ، ثم استنطقهم فتكلموا ، ثم أخذ عليهم العهد والميثاق { وأشهدهم على أنفسهم ألسنت بر ربكم قالوا بلى } قال : فإني أشهد عليكم السموات السبع ، وأشهد عليكم أبائكم آدم { أن تقولوا يوم القيامة } إنا لم نعلم بهذا ، اعلموا أنه لا إله غيري ولا رب غيري ولا تشركوا بي شيئاً ، إني سأرسل إليكم رسلي يذكرنكم عهدي وميثاقي ، وأنزل عليكم كتبتي قالوا : شهدنا بأنك ربنا وإلهنا ، لا رب لنا غيرك ولا إله لنا غيرك ، فأقروا " اهـ

In "al-Durr al-Manthur" (361/4), it is stated: "Abd bin Humaid, Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Hanbal (May Allah have mercy upon him) in "Zawa'id al-Musnad", Al-Tabari, Ibn Abi Hatim (May Allah have mercy upon him), Abu al-Sheikh (May Allah have mercy upon him), Ibn al-

Mundhir (May Allah have mercy upon him) in "Kitab al-Radd 'ala al-Jahmiyya", al-Lalaka'i, Ibn Mardawayh, al-Bayhaqi in "al-Asma' wa al-Sifat", and Ibn 'Asakir in his "Tarikh" all narrated from Ubay bin Ka'b (May Allah be pleased with him) regarding His saying, **{And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants}** until His saying, **{for what the falsifiers did}**, that He gathered them as souls in their forms, then He made them speak, then He took a covenant and a pledge from them, **{And He made them testify of themselves [saying], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, [You are] our Lord."}** He said, "I take the seven heavens as witnesses against you, and I take your father Adam as a witness against you, **{that you will not say on the Day of Resurrection}, 'We were unaware of this.'** Know that there is no God but Me, and no Lord but Me, and do not associate anything with Me. I will send My Messengers to you, reminding you of My covenant and My pledge, and I will send down My Books to you." They said, "We bear witness that You are our Lord and our God. We have no Lord or God other than You." So they acknowledged..."

وقال ذاك الواحد في تفسيره (١ / ٢٥٠ : قوله : { أو تقولوا } أيها الذرية محتجين يوم القيامة : { إنما أشرك آبؤنا من قبل } أي : قبلنا ، ونقضوا العهد { وكنا ذرية من بعدهم } صغاراً فاقتدينا بهم { أفتهلكنا بما فعل المبطلون } أفتعدبنا بما فعل المشركون المكذبون بالتوحيد ، وإنما اقتدينا بهم ، وكنا في غفلة عن الميثاق ، وهذه الآية قطع لمعذرتهم فلا يمكنهم الاحتجاج بكون الآباء على الشرك بعد تذكير الله بأخذ الميثاق بالتوحيد على كل واحد من الذرية . " اهـ

This was also mentioned by al-Wahidi in his Tafsir (1/250): His saying, {Or do you say}, meaning, O descendants, arguing on the Day of Resurrection, {Our forefathers associated others with Allah before}, meaning, before us, and they broke the covenant, {and we are merely their descendants}, young, so we followed them, {Will You destroy us for what the falsifiers did?} Meaning, will You punish us for what the polytheists who denied the Oneness of Allah did, when we only followed them, and we were unaware of the covenant? This verse refutes their excuse, so they cannot argue that their forefathers were polytheists after Allah reminded them of taking the covenant of monotheism from each one of the descendants."

Allah, the Exalted, said:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاسْمَعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَرَهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ١٠٨ لَا جَرَمَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ الْخَسِرُونَ

"Those are the ones upon whose hearts, hearing, and sight Allah has set a seal; and it is those who are the heedless. (108) It is certain that they in the Hereafter will be the losers. (109)" (Al-Nahl: 108-109)

قال بن جرير في تفسيره (٦ / ١٧٣ : " يقول تعالى ذكره : هؤلاء المشركون الذين وصفت لكم صفتهم في هذه الآيات أيها الناس هم القوم الذين طبع الله على قلوبهم، فخنم عليها بطابعه، فلا يؤمنون ولا يهتدون، وأصم أسماعهم فلا يسمعون داعي الله إلى الهدى، وأعمى أبصارهم فلا يبصرون بما حجج الله إِبْصَارَ معتبر ومتعظ (وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ) يقول : هؤلاء الذين جعل الله فيهم هذه الأفعال هم الساهون ، عما أعد الله لأمثالهم من أهل الكفر وعما يراد بهم. " اهـ

Al-Tabari said in his Tafsir (306/17): "Allah, the Exalted, says: 'These polytheists, whose description I have given you in these verses, O people, are the ones upon whose hearts Allah has set a seal, sealing them with His seal, so they do not believe nor are guided. He has deafened their ears so they do not hear the call of Allah to guidance, and He has blinded their eyes so they do not see the proofs of Allah with eyes that consider and take heed. {And it is those who are the

heedless} He says: And these, in whom Allah has placed these actions, are the ones heedless of what Allah has prepared for their likes from among the disbelievers and what is intended for them."

Allah, the Exalted, said:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أُذُنٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

"And We have certainly created for Hellfire many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless." (Al-A'raf: 179)

قال الطبري : وقوله : (أولئك هم الغافلون)، يقول تعالى ذكره: هؤلاء الذين وصفتُ صفتهم، القوم الذين غفلوا يعني : سهوا عن آياتي وحججي ، وتركوا تدبرها والاعتبار بها والاستدلال على ما دلّت عليه من توحيد ربّها، لا البهائم التي قد عرفها ربّها ما سخرها له." اهـ [الجامع (١٣/٢٨٠)]

Al-Tabari said: "And His words: (It is they who are the heedless), Allah, the Exalted, says: 'These, whose description I have given, are the people who are heedless,' meaning: negligent of My signs and proofs. They abandoned reflecting upon them, taking heed from them, and using them as evidence for what they indicate of the Oneness of their Lord, unlike the livestock that their Lord has made to know what He has subjected them to.'" [Al-Jami' (280/13)]

وفي تفسير مقاتل ٢ (١٦) قال : " { أولئك هم الغافلون } ، لأن الأنعام تعرف ربها وتذكره ، وهم لا يعرفون ربهم ولا يوحدونه . " اهـ

In Muqatil's (May Allah have mercy upon him) Tafsir (2/16), he said: "'(It is they who are the heedless),' because livestock know their Lord and remember Him, while these do not know their Lord nor do they worship Him alone."

Allah, the Exalted, also said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنَّنُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

"Indeed, those who do not hope for their meeting with Us and are satisfied with the life of this world and feel secure therein and those who are heedless of Our signs - Those - their refuge will be the Fire, for what they used to earn." (Yunus: 7-8)

يوم مكذبون بالثواب والعقاب، متنافسون في In قال الطبري : يقول تعالى ذكره: إن الذين لا يخافون لقاءنا القيامة، فهم لذل زين الدنيا وزخارفها، راضون بها عوضا من الآخرة، مطمئنين إليها ساكنين والذين هم عن آيات الله وهي أدلته على وحدانيته، وحججه على عباده ، في إخلاص العبادة له (غافلون) ، معرضون عنها لاهون، لا يتأملونها تأمل ناصح لنفسه، فيعلموا بها حقيقة ما دلّتهم عليه، ويعرفوا بها بطول ما هم عليه مقيمون (أولئك مأواهم النار . " اهـ [جامع البيان (١٥/٢٥)]

Al-Tabari said: "Allah the Exalted says: Those who do not fear meeting Us (on the Day of Judgment) are the ones who deny reward and punishment on that Day. They compete for the adornment and beauty of this world, content with it in place of the Hereafter, feeling secure and settled in it. And those who are heedless of the signs of Allah - which are His proofs of His

Oneness and His arguments to His servants for the sincerity of worship to Him - **turning away from them, unconcerned**, not reflecting upon them with the reflection of one who advises himself, so that they may know through them the reality of what they indicate and come to know through them the truth of their prolonged stay (in this world) - those, their abode is the Fire." End quote. [Jami' al-Bayan (25/15)]

And Allah the Exalted said:

وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

{And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring the adornment of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect.} [Al-Kahf 18:28]

[I say]: This verse indicates that this heedlessness is a punishment from Allah the Exalted, for He knows their state and that there is no good in them and that their place is not good.

قال الطبري في تفسيره (١٨/٨) وقوله : (وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ) يقول تعالى ذكره لنبيه صلى وسلم " ولا تطع يا محمد من شغلنا قلبه من الكفار الذين سألوك طرد الرهط الذين يدعون ربهم بالغداة والعشي عنك، عن ذكرنا بالكفر وغلبة الشقاء عليه، واتباع هواه، وترك اتباع أمر الله ونهيه، وأثر هوى نفسه على طاعة ربه

Al-Tabari said in his Tafsir (8/18) regarding His saying: {and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire}, "Allah the Exalted says to His Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, 'Do not obey, O Muhammad, those among the disbelievers whose hearts We have made heedless - those who asked you to drive away the group who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening - from Our remembrance, due to their disbelief and the dominance of wretchedness over them, and who follow their desires, abandoning obedience to Allah's command and prohibition, preferring their own desires over obedience to their Lord.'"

[I say]: All these verses indicate that heedlessness, which is accompanied by ignorance and stupidity, is not an excuse accepted by Allah. He has associated with it the greatest shirk (polytheism).

At times Allah the Exalted informs us that He does not accept any excuse from the polytheist until he repents to Him from shirk, even if he did it out of ignorance:

As He says:

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

{Indeed, repentance accepted by Allah is only for those who do wrong in ignorance and then repent soon after. It is those to whom Allah will turn in forgiveness, and Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.} [An-Nisa' 4:17]

فعن مجاهد قال : قوله : " إنما التوبة على الله للذين يعملون السوء بجهالة"، قال: كل من عمل بمعصية الله، فذاك منه بجهل حتى يرجع عنه. وعن قتادة قوله : "للذين يعملون السوء بجهالة"، قال: اجتمع أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فرأوا أن كل شيء عُصِي به فهو "جهالة"، عمدًا كان أو غيره . [أنظر تفسير بن جرير (٨/٨٩)]

Mujahid (May Allah have mercy upon him) said about the verse, "Verily, repentance in the sight of Allah is only for those who do evil in ignorance..." that it refers to everyone who commits a sin against Allah, for it is done out of ignorance until they repent from it. **Qatadah (May Allah have mercy upon him) said about the verse, "for those who do evil in ignorance..."** that the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) gathered and saw that everything that is disobeyed with is considered "ignorance," whether it was intentional or unintentional. [See Tafsir Al-Tabari (89/8)]

And as Allah Almighty says,

وَلَمَّا سَقَطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا لَنِ لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"And when regret overcame them and they saw that they had gone astray, they said, 'If our Lord does not have mercy upon us and forgive us, we will surely be among the losers.'" (Al-A'raf 149)

قال الطبري : " قوله : "ورأوا أنهم قد ضلوا"، ورأوا أنهم قد جاروا عن قصد السبيل، وذهبوا عن دين الله، وكفروا بربهم، قالوا تائبين إلى الله منيبين إليه من كفرهم به: "لئن لم يرحمنا ربنا ويغفر لنا لنكونن من الخاسرين". اهـ

Al-Tabari said, "His saying, 'and they saw that they had gone astray,' means they saw that they had intentionally deviated from the right path and abandoned the religion of Allah, and disbelieved in their Lord. So they said, repenting to Allah and turning back to Him from their disbelief in Him, 'Unless our Lord has mercy upon us and forgives us, we shall certainly be of the losers.'"

[I say]: So you see that they committed shirk (polytheism) out of ignorance. When it became clear to them that they were polytheists by their actions, without realizing their state, they knew that Allah would not excuse them for their ignorance without repentance and remorse, so they said what they said.

At times Allah Almighty informs us that the polytheists are in clear misguidance, which is ignorance:

As is apparent from this word in language and Islamic law. As He says,

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَيْتُكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ

"And remember Him as He has guided you, and verily, you were before that of those astray." (Al-Baqarah 198)

روى ابن أبي حاتم في تفسيره (٢/٣٥٣) عن مجاهد رحمه الله قال "لمن الضالين " أي لمن الجاهلين

Ibn Abi Hatim narrated in his Tafsir (353/2) that Mujahid (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "'Of those astray' means 'of the ignorant.'"

وقال الطبري في تفسيره (٤/١٨٣) : " يعني بذلك جل ثناؤه: واذكروا الله أيها المؤمنون عند المشعر الحرام بالثناء عليه، والشكر له على أياديه عندكم، وليكن ذكركم إياه بالخضوع لأمره، والطاعة له والشكر على ما أنعم عليكم من التوفيق، لما وفقكم له من سنن إبراهيم خليله بعد الذي كنتم فيه من الشرك والحيرة والعمى عن طريق الحق وبعد الضلالة. " اهـ

And Al-Tabari said in his Tafsir (183/4), "Allah, the Most Glorified, means by that: 'And remember Allah,' O believers, at the Sacred House, by praising Him and thanking Him for His favors upon you. Let your remembrance of Him be with submission to His command, obedience to Him, and gratitude for what He has bestowed upon you of guidance, to which He has guided you from the ways of Abraham, His friend, after the polytheism, confusion, and blindness to the path of truth, and after the misguidance which you were in." End quote.

The most eloquent verse in this regard is the saying of the Exalted:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

{...Not the ones upon whom His anger falls, nor those who are astray} (Al-Fatiha 1:7)

[I said]: Every misguided person is so because of their ignorance. How can one be misguided while knowing the truth?

قال الطبري : فكل حائذ عن قصد السبيل، وسالك غير المنهج القويم ، فضال عند العرب، لإضلاله وجه الطريق. فذلك سمي الله جل ذكره النصارى ضلالا لخطئهم في الحق منهج السبيل، وأخذهم من الدين في غير الطريق المستقيم. " اهـ جامع البيان (١/١٩٥)

Al-Tabari said: "Every person who deviates from the straight path and follows a path other than the right one is considered misguided by the Arabs, due to their straying from the right way. Therefore, Allah, Glory be to Him, called the Christians misguided due to their erring from the right path and their taking from the religion in a way other than the straight path." End quote. Jami' al-Bayan (195/1)

قال ابن كثير : " الضالين وهم الذين فقدوا العلم فهم هائمون في الضلالة لا يهتدون إلى الحق. " [أنظر : تفسير ابن كثير (١/١٤٠)]

Ibn Kathir said: "The misguided are those who have lost knowledge, so they wander in misguidance without being guided to the truth." [See: Tafsir Ibn Kathir (140/1)]

At times the Quran mentions that the polytheists are merely imitators in most cases, and imitation is unanimously considered ignorance:

And that is as He says:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَّلُوْا كَانِ عَابَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ

"And when it is said to them, "Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger," they say, "Sufficient for us is that upon which we found our fathers." Even though their fathers knew nothing, nor were they guided?" (Al-Ma'idah 5:104)

Similarly, His saying:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَفْقَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَاءُنَا ؕ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ

"And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed," they say, "Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers upon." Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?" (Al-Baqarah 170)

قال الطبري (١١/١٣٧) : قال الله تعالى ذكره لنبيه محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم: أو لو كان آباء هؤلاء القائلين هذه المقالة لا يعلمون شيئاً ؟ يقول: لم يكونوا يعلمون أنّ ما يضيفونه إلى الله تعالى ذكره من تحريم البحيرة والسائبة والوصيلة والحام، كذب وفرية على الله، لا حقيقة لذلك ولا صحة لأنهم كانوا أتباع المفترين الذين ابتدعوا تحريم ذلك، افتراءً على الله بقبيلهم ما كانوا يقولون من إضافتهم إلى الله تعالى ذكره ما يضيفون ولا كانوا فيما هم به عاملون من ذلك على استقامة وصواب، بل كانوا على ضلالة وخطأ. " اهـ

Al-Tabari (137/11) said: "Allah, the Exalted, said to His Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him: 'Even though their fathers knew nothing?' Meaning: Did they not know that what they attribute to Allah, the Exalted, by forbidding al-Bahirah, al-Sa'ibah, al-Wasilah, and al-Ham is a lie and a fabrication against Allah, with no truth or validity to it? For they were followers of the liars who initiated the prohibition of that, falsely. It is upon Allah that they will be questioned about what they used to say, attributing to Allah, Exalted is He, what they attribute, while they were not, in what they were upon, acting with righteousness and correctness, but rather they were upon misguidance and error." End quote.

قال ابن عبد البر: وقد قال أهل العلم : حد العلم التبيين وإدراك المعلوم على ما هو عليه فمن بان له الشيء فقد علمه والمقلد لا علم له لم يختلّفوا في ذلك . [جامع بيان العلم (٤٩٦)]

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said: And the people of knowledge have said: "The definition of knowledge is certainty and comprehension of the known as it truly is. So whoever has clarity about a thing, then he has knowledge of it. **And the one who blindly follows has no knowledge.**" They did not differ in this. [Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm (496)]

وقال ابن قدامة في الروضة : " إنا نعلم يقيناً أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أمر اليهود والنصارى بالإسلام واتباعه ، وذهبهم على إصرارهم وقتلهم جميعاً بقتل البالغ منهم ، وإنا نعلم أن المعاند العارف ممن يقتل ، وأنما الأكثر مقلدة اعتقدوا دين آباءهم تقليداً ، ولم يعرفوا معجزات الرسول وصدقه ، والآيات الدالات في القرآن على هذا كثيرة . "

And Ibn Qudamah said in al-Rawdah: "We know with certainty that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, commanded the Jews and Christians to embrace Islam and follow him, and he censured them for their insistence (on disbelief) and fought them all, killing their postpubescent males. And we know that the stubborn disbeliever who is aware (of the truth) is one who is to be killed. And indeed, most of the blind followers embraced the religion of their forefathers out of blind following and did not know the miracles of the Messenger and his truthfulness. And the verses in the Quran indicating this are many."

At times, Allah, Exalted is He, affirms for them the name of polytheist and disbeliever before the proof is established against them and before they even hear it in the first place:

And that is like His saying, Exalted is He:

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَوْلَىٰ قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ

"It is not for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even if they were their relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of Hellfire." (At-Tawbah 9:113)

[I say]: And this verse was revealed concerning the deceased polytheists who were relatives of the Muslims, who were forbidden from seeking forgiveness for them even if they had died upon polytheism before the advent of Islam. And despite that, Allah named them polytheists and did not excuse them due to ignorance.

And He, Exalted is He, also said:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتْلَ أَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَاؤُهُمْ لِيُرْذُوهُمْ وَلِيَلْبِسُوا عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا فَعَلُوهُ ۖ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ

"Thus does their Lord make fair-seeming to many of the polytheists the killing of their children - their partners (in worship) - so as to destroy them and to confuse for them their religion. And if Allah had willed, they would not have done it, so leave them and that which they invent." (Quran 6:137)

And this was the action of the people of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance) before Islam, yet He named them polytheists.

And He, Exalted is He, said:

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah. Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know. " (At-Tawbah 9:6)

[I said]: So Allah Almighty called this one who did not hear the Quran nor did he know anything by the name of a polytheist and did not excuse him for his ignorance.

قال الطبري في تفسير هذه الآية : " (ذلك بأنهم قوم لا يعلمون) يقول : تفعل ذلك بهم، من إعطائك إياهم الأمان ليسمعوا القرآن، وردك إياهم إذا أبوا الإسلام إلى مأمَنهم من أجل أنهم قوم جهلة لا يفقهون عن الله حجة، ولا يعلمون ما لهم بالإيمان بالله لو آمنوا وما عليهم من الوزر والإثم بتركهم الإيمان بالله . " اهـ

Al-Tabari said in the interpretation of this verse: **"(That is because they are a people who do not know.)"** meaning: He does that to them, by granting them security to hear the Quran, and returning them to their place of safety if they refuse Islam, because they are ignorant people who do not understand any argument from Allah, nor do they know what is in it for them by believing in Allah if they believed, and what burden of sin and transgression is upon them by abandoning belief in Allah. End quote.

And Allah Almighty said:

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنْفَكِينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ

"Those who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture and the polytheists were not to be left alone until there came to them clear evidence -" (Al-Bayyinah 98:1)

So Allah Almighty called them polytheists before the clear evidence came to them, meaning the Messenger, as in the verse after it: **"- a Messenger from Allah, reciting purified pages -"** So this indicates that they are not excused by ignorance, even if it was before the arrival of the Prophetic message to them.

And He said:

وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ

"And that which she used to worship other than Allah averted her. Indeed, she was of a people disbelieving." (An-Naml 27:43)

So Allah Almighty called her people and her disbelievers before the coming of Solomon, peace be upon him, to them and his before his call to them. So the name of disbelief was attached to them before the message, and they were not excused by ignorance or by being from the people of the period of ignorance as they claim.

It becomes clear from all of this that whoever commits polytheism is a polytheist before the message and after it. So ignorance is not an excuse or a preventative from applying the name of polytheism to whoever is characterized by it. The reason for this is the confusion between the names and rulings in the Quran. So the meaning of the names of the religion are: (**Muslim**, **Mu'min** (believer), **Mushrik** (polytheist), **Zalim** (oppressor), **Sariq** (thief)...) and so on. And the meaning of the rulings of the religion are: loyalty, love, hate, fighting... and other than it from the rulings of the religion.

Most of those who have this doubt did not differentiate between the names and the rulings. The evidence for this is their using as evidence His saying, the Most High: **"And We were not to punish until We have sent a Messenger."** So they denied the name of polytheism for whoever is characterized by it, and their argument is the verse, and they said "Indeed, an act of polytheism does not make one a disbeliever until the proof has been established." They fail to differentiate between the name and the ruling. Allah, the Exalted, negated the ruling, meaning the worldly punishment, in the verse when He said: **'And We were not to punish...'** He did not negate the name. Had He done so, He would have said: **'And We were not to make them disbelievers.'** Reflect upon this, may Allah have mercy on you.

At times, the Quran mentions that the polytheists are unaware of their disbelief and the futility of their deeds due to their ignorance of their own state:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ عَامِنُوا كَمَا عَامِنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

As Allah says: **'Indeed, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not.'** (12) And He says after it: **'And when it is said to them, "Believe as the people have believed," they**

say, "Should we believe as the fools have believed?" Unquestionably, it is they who are the fools, but they know [it] not.' (Al-Baqarah 2:13)

قال الطبري: "فكذلك صفة أهل النفاق : مُفسدون في الأرض بمعصيتهم فيها ربهم، وركوبهم فيها ما نهاهم عن ركوبه، وتضييعهم فرائضه، وشكهم في دين الله الذي لا يقبل من أحد عملاً إلا بالتصديق به والإيقان بحقيقته ، وكذبهم المؤمنين بدعواهم غير ما هم عليه مقيمون من الشك والريب، وبمظاهرتهم أهل التكذيب بالله وكُتبه ورسله على أولياء الله، إذا وجدوا إلى ذلك سبيلاً. فذلك إفساد المنافقين في أرض الله، وهم يحسبون أنهم يفعلون ذلك مصلحون فيها. فلم يسقط الله جل ثناؤه عنهم عقوبته، ولا خفف أليم ما أعد من عقابه لأهل معصيته – بحسبانهم أنهم فيما أتوا من معاصي الله مصلحون – بل أوجب لهم الدرك الأسفل من ناره والأليم من عذابه، والعار العاجل بسبب الله إياهم وشتمه لهم، فقال تعالى : (أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ) وذلك من حكم الله جل ثناؤه فيهم، أدل الدليل على تكذيبه تعالى قول القائلين : إن عقوبات الله لا يستحقها إلا المعاند ربّه فيما لزمه من حقوقه وفروضه، بعد علمه وثبوت الحجة عليه بمعرفته بلزوم ذلك إياه. "اهـ

Al-Tabari said: "Such is the description of the hypocrites: they are corrupters on earth by disobeying their Lord therein, engaging in what He has forbidden them from, neglecting His obligations, doubting the religion of Allah - which does not accept any deed except with belief in it and certainty in its truth - and lying about the believers, claiming they are something they are not, remaining in doubt and suspicion. They show support for those who deny Allah, His Books, and His Messenger against the allies of Allah whenever they find an opportunity. This is the corruption of the hypocrites on Allah's earth, while they think that they are doing good by their actions. Allah, the Exalted, does not let their punishment be neglected, nor does He lighten the painful punishment He has prepared for those who disobey Him - just because they think they are doing good by disobeying Allah. Rather, He has prepared for them the lowest level of Hellfire and the most painful punishment, along with disgrace in this life by being cursed and reviled by Allah. He says: '**Indeed, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not.**' This is from the decree of Allah, the Exalted, concerning them, and it is the clearest proof against those who claim that Allah's punishments are only deserved by those who defy their Lord in His rights and obligations after knowing and being certain of their obligation towards Him." End quote.

[I said]: "For Allah's sake, after this verse and this interpretation from this scholar, is there any further need for proof? This shows that the doubt of these (excusers) is old and appeared after Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, in its present form. It is the work of the early Jahmites, but their expressions were not like this.

As for His saying: "**But they do not perceive,**"

قال الطبري : " وهذا القول من الله جل ثناؤه : " تكذيب للمنافقين في دعواهم. إذا أمروا بطاعة الله فيما أمرهم الله به، ونهوا عن معصية الله فيما نهاهم الله عنه، قالوا: إنما نحن مصلحون لا مفسدون، ونحن على رُشدٍ وهدى – فيما أنكرتموه علينا – دونكم لا ضالون. فكذبهم الله عز وجل في ذلك من قبلهم فقال: ألا إنهم هم المفسدون المخالفون أمر الله عز وجل، المتعدون حدوده، الراكبون معصيته، التاركون فروضه، وهم لا يشعرون ولا يدرون أنهم كذلك – لا الذين يأمرونهم بالقسط منا المؤمنين وينهونهم عن معاصي الله في أرضه من المسلمين. " اهـ

Al-Tabari said: "And this saying from Allah, Glory be to Him, is a refutation of the hypocrites in their claim. When they are commanded to obey Allah in what He has commanded them, and forbidden from disobeying Allah in what He has forbidden them, they say: 'We are only reformers, not corrupters, and we are upon guidance and light - in what you deny us - unlike you

who are astray.' So Allah, the Exalted and Majestic, refuted them in that from before them, saying: 'Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, opposing the command of Allah, the Exalted and Majestic, transgressing His limits, committing His disobedience, abandoning His obligations, **and they do not perceive nor do they realize that they are like that** - not those who command them with justice from among us, the believers, and forbid them from the disobedience of Allah in His land from among the Muslims.'" End quote.

And as for His saying: "**Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish, but they do not know,**"

قال الطبري : والسفهاء جمع سفيه ، كما العلماء جمع عليم ، والحكماء جمع حكيم . والسفيه : الجاهل ، الضعيف الرأي ، القليل المعرفة بمواضع المنافع والمضار . ولذلك سمى الله عز وجل النساء والصبيان سفهاء ، فقال تعالى : (وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا) فقال عامة أهل التأويل : هم النساء والصبيان لضعف آرائهم ، وقلة معرفتهم بمواضع المصالح والمضار التي تصرف إليها الأموال ... قال : " وهذا خبرٌ من الله تعالى عن المنافقين الذين تقدم نعتهم لهم ، ووصفه إياهم بما وصفهم به من الشك والتكذيب أنهم هم الجمال في أديانهم ، الضعفاء الآراء في اعتقاداتهم واختياراتهم التي اختاروها لأنفسهم ، من الشك والريب في أمر الله وأمر رسوله وأمر ، نبوته ، وفيما جاء به من عند الله ، وأمر البعث ، لإساءتهم إلى أنفسهم بما أتوا من ذلك وهم يحسبون أنهم يُحْسِنُونَ . وذلك هو عَيْنُ السفيه ، لأن السفيه إنما يُفسد من حيث يرى أنه يُصلح ، ويُضيع من حيث يرى أنه يحفظ ، فكذاك المنافق : يعصي رَبَّهُ من حيث يرى أنه يطيعه ، ويكفر به من حيث يرى أنه يُؤمن به ، ويسيء إلى نفسه من حيث يحسب أنه يُحسن إليها ، كما وصفهم به ربنا جل ذكره فقال : (أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ) (وقال :) (أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ) دون المؤمنين المصدقين بالله وبكتابه ، وبرسوله وثوابه وعقابه (ولكن لا يعلمون) وكذلك كان ابن عباس يتأول هذه الآية . " ، ثم روى عن ابن عباس يقول الله جل ثناؤه : (أَلَا السُّفَهَاءُ) يقول : الجاهل ، ولكن لا يعلمون ، يقول : ولكن لا يعقلون . " ثم عاد فقال : " والدلالة التي تدل عليه هذه الآية من خطأ قول من زعم أن العقوبة من الله لا يستحقها إلا المعاند رَبَّهُ ، بعد علمه بصحة ما عانده فيه — نظير دلالة الآيات الأخر التي قد تقدم ذكرنا تأويلها في قوله " ولكن لا يشعرون " ، ونظائر ذلك " اه

Al-Tabari said:

'And the foolish' is the plural of 'fool,' just as 'the scholars' is the plural of 'scholar,' and 'the wise' is the plural of 'wise.' And the fool is the ignorant, the weak in opinion, the one with little knowledge of the areas of benefit and harm. That is why Allah, the Exalted and Majestic, called women and children fools, saying: **(And do not give the foolish your property which Allah has made for you a means of support)**. So the majority of the people of interpretation said: 'They are the women and children because of the weakness of their opinions and their lack of knowledge of the areas of benefit and harm to which money is spent...' He said: 'And this is news from Allah, the Exalted, about the hypocrites whose description He has already given and whom He has described with what He has described them of doubt and denial, that they are the most ignorant in their religions, the weakest in opinions in their beliefs and choices that they have chosen for themselves, of doubt and suspicion in the matter of Allah and the matter of His Messenger and the matter of his Prophethood, and in what he brought from Allah, and the matter of the Resurrection, because of their wronging themselves with what they have done, while they think that they are doing good to themselves. And that is the very definition of foolishness, for the fool only corrupts what he thinks he is reforming, and destroys what he thinks he is preserving. So too is the hypocrite: he disobeys his Lord while thinking he is obeying Him, and disbelieves in Him while thinking he believes in Him, and harms himself while thinking he is doing good to himself, as our Lord, Glory be to Him, described them, saying: "Indeed, it is they

who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not." And He said: "Indeed, it is they who are the foolish," unlike the believing who believe in Allah, His Book, His Messenger, His reward, and His punishment, "but they do not know." And Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) used to interpret this verse." Then he narrated from Ibn Abbas (May Allah have mercy upon him) that Allah, the Exalted, says: "Indeed, it is they who are the foolish," meaning: the ignorant, "but they do not know," meaning: but they do not understand." Then he, may Allah have mercy on him, returned and said: **"And the indication that this verse points to the error of the saying of those who claim that the punishment from Allah is not deserved except by the one who opposes his Lord, after knowing the truth of what he opposed Him in - is similar to the indication of the other verses that we have previously mentioned in the interpretation of His saying: "But they perceive [it] not," and the like."**

[I say]: And it has been established to me that the intended ones here are the Mu'tazila, and at their head are the Mu'tazilite al-Jahiz and al-Anbari. They were the first to say that the ignorant among the Jews, Christians, and everyone who worshipped other than Allah are excused. Ibn Kaysan shared this view with them, as al-Qurtubi narrated from him in his Tafsir (1/204) that he said: Ibn Kaysan said: "What is upon the one who did not know that he is corrupting from blame? He is only blamed if he knew that he was corrupting and then corrupted knowingly."

And more explanation will come in mentioning the origin of the excuse of ignorance and mentioning who said it and how he said it.

وقال ابن كثير في تفسيره (١/١٨٠) : " يقول : ألا إن هذا الذي يعتمدونه ويزعمون أنه إصلاح هو عين الفساد، ولكن من جهلهم لا يشعرون بكونه فساداً."

And Ibn Kathir said in his Tafsir (1/180): "He says: Indeed, this that they adopt and claim is reform is the essence of corruption, but due to their ignorance, they do not perceive it as corruption."

وقال في قوله : {وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ} يَعْنِي وَمِنْ تَمَامِ جَهْلِهِمْ أَنَّهُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ بِحَالِهِمْ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ وَالْجَهْلِ، وَذَلِكَ أَبْلَغُ فِي الْعَمَى وَالْبُعْدِ عَنِ الْهُدَى

And He said in his explanation of the verse: "{**But they do not perceive.**}" Meaning: And from the completeness of their ignorance is that they are unaware of their own state of misguidance and ignorance, and that is worse for them and more indicative of their blindness and distance from guidance.

وقال الأخفش في معاني القرآن (١/٩٤) : " قال تعالى " ألا إنهم هم السفهاء ولكن لا يعلمون " أي لا يعلمون أن وبال ذلك يرجع عليهم ويقال إذا وصفوا بالسفه فلم لا يكون ذلك عذرا لهم فالجواب انه إنما لحقهم ذلك إذ عابوا الحق فأنزلوا أنفسهم تلك المنزلة كما قال تعالى " ان هم إلا كالأنعام " لصدهم وإعراضهم إذ بعده بل هم أضل سبيلا لأن الأنعام قد يصرفها راعيها كيف شاء وهؤلاء لا يهتدون بالإنذار والعظة وأيضا فإذا سفهوا المؤمنين فهم في تلك الحال مستحقون لهذا الاسم [قلت] فأنت ترى أن أهل التفسير الأوائل استدلوا بهذه الآيات على عدم عذر الكافر " اهـ

Al-Akhfash said in Ma'ani Al-Quran (94/1): "The Almighty said, 'Indeed, it is they who are the ignorant, but they do not perceive.' Meaning, they do not realize that the consequences of their actions will return upon them." It is said, **"If they are described as ignorant, then why shouldn't that be an excuse for them?"** The answer is that they deserve this description

because they rejected the truth and lowered themselves to this level, as the Almighty said, **"They are not but like livestock,"** due to their rejection and aversion. In fact, they are more astray than livestock, because livestock are guided by their shepherd as he pleases, while these people are not guided by warnings and advice. Moreover, if they consider the believers to be ignorant, then they are, in that case, deserving of this name.

[I said]: So you see that the early scholars of Tafsir (interpretation) used these verses as evidence that the disbeliever has no excuse for his ignorance, and they refuted the doubts of the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah sects with these clear verses on the matter.

وقال ابن القيم في هذه الآيات في كتابه بدائع الفوائد (ص : ٦٧٨) : " وصفهم بغاية الجهل وهو أنه لا شعور لهم البتة بكونهم مفسدين ، وتأمل كيف نفى عنهم الشعور في هذا الموضع ثم نفى عنهم العلم في قولهم : " أنؤمن كما آمن السفهاء " فقال : " ألا إنهم هم السفهاء ولكن لا يعلمون " فنفى علمهم بسفاههم ، وشعورهم بفسادهم ، وهذا أبلغ ما يكون من الذم والتجهيل أن يكون الرجل مفسدا ولا شعور له ألبتة ، مع أن أثر فسادهم مشهور في الخارج ، مرئي للعباد ، وهو لا يشعر به وهذا يدل على استحكام الفساد على مداركه وطرق علمه كذلك كونه سفيها ، والسفه غاية الجهل وهو مركب من عدم العلم بما يصلح معاشه ومعهده وإرادته ... " اهـ

Ibn al-Qayyim said about these verses in his book Bada'i' al-Fawa'id (p. 678): "He described them with the utmost ignorance, which is that they have absolutely no awareness of their own corruption. Reflect on how He denied them awareness in this instance, then denied them knowledge in their statement, **'Should we believe as the foolish have believed?'** He said, **'Indeed, it is they who are the ignorant, but they do not perceive.'** So He denied them knowledge of their ignorance and awareness of their corruption. This is the most severe form of censure and condemnation, that a person would be corrupt and have absolutely no awareness of it, even though the effects of his corruption are apparent externally and visible to people, yet he remains unaware. This indicates the deep-rootedness of corruption in his faculties and ways of understanding, just as it indicates his ignorance. Ignorance is the epitome of foolishness, and it is composed of a lack of knowledge of what benefits his life, his religion, and his hereafter..."

And in this context is also the Almighty's saying:

وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يُضِلُّوكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ

"A faction of the People of the Scripture wish they could lead you astray. But they do not lead astray except themselves, and they do not perceive." (Al Imran: 3:69)

قال الطبري في هذه الآية : أخبر جلّ ثناءه عنهم أنهم يفعلون ما يفعلون، من محاولة صدّ المؤمنين عن الهدى إلى الضلالة والردى، على جهل منهم بما الله بهم محل من عقوبته، ومذّخر لهم من أليم عذابه، فقال تعالى ذكره: "وما يشعرون" أنهم لا يضلون إلا أنفسهم، بمحاولتهم إضلالكم أيها المؤمنون ومعنى قوله : "وما يشعرون"، وما يدرون ولا يعلمون . " اهـ (جامع البيان ٦/٥٠٢

Al-Tabari said in regards to this verse: Allah, the Exalted in Might, informs us that they do what they do - attempting to turn the believers away from guidance towards misguidance and destruction - out of their ignorance of their true standing before Allah's punishment and what He has in store for them of His painful torment. So the Exalted One said: **"And they perceive not"** that they only mislead themselves by trying to mislead you, O believers. The meaning of His

saying: **"And they perceive not"** is that they do not realize nor do they know. (Tafsir al-Tabari 6/502).

And Allah, the Exalted, also said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

"O you who have believed, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet or be loud to him in speech like the loudness of some of you to others, lest your deeds become worthless while you perceive not." (Al-Hujurat 49:2)

[I say]: And His saying **"while you perceive not"** means "while you do not know" as al-Tabari said. So, the nullification of deeds while being unaware of it indicates the absence of an excuse due to ignorance.

And at times, Allah, the Exalted, rebukes the following of the people of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance) and imitating them, indicating that they are not excused for their ignorance, nor are those who follow them in their ignorance:

And regarding this matter, four verses were revealed in the Quran: His saying, the Exalted:

يَظُنُّونَ بِاللّٰهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ

"..They think of Allah other than the truth - the thought of ignorance. They say, "Have we no share in the matter?..." (Al-Imran 3:154)

And His saying:

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ

"When those who disbelieved had put into their hearts chauvinism, the chauvinism of ignorance..." (Al-Fath 48:26)

And His saying:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى

"And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance..." (Al-Ahzab 33:33)

And His saying:

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ

"Then is it the judgment of ignorance they desire?" (Al-Ma'idah 5:50)

I say: The rulings of Jahiliyyah and their assumptions, beliefs, and chauvinism are all based on ignorance and misguidance, which they establish based on their opinions and desires.

And at times, the Exalted informs us that He judges someone as a disbeliever for associating partners with Him, even if they did not intend disbelief:

This is mentioned in several verses, such as His saying:

وَلَمَّا سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ إِنَّ نَعْفَ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ يُعَذِّبُ طَائِفَةٌ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ

"And if you ask them, they will surely say, "We were only joking and playing." Say, "Was it Allah, and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking?" (65) Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief. If We pardon one faction of you - We will punish another faction because they were criminals." (At-Tawbah: 65-66)

ويقول محمد بن عبد الوهاب في كشف الشبهات (ص ٢٢): بعد أن أنكر على الذين يقولون أن الكفر لا يكون إلا بتكذيب أو إنكار أو جحود: فما معنى الباب الذي ذكره العلماء في كل مذهب؟ باب حكم المرتد، وهو المسلم الذي يكفر بعد إسلامه، ثم ذكروا أنواعا كثيرة كل نوع منها يكفر ويحل دم الرجل وماله حتى أنهم ذكروا أشياء يسيرة عند من فعلها مثل كلمة يذكرها بلسانه دون قلبه أو كلمة يذكرها على وجه المزاح واللعب ويقال أيضا: الذين قال الله فيهم {يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةً الْكُفْرَ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ} [التوبة: ٧٤] أما سمعت الله كفرهم بكلمة مع كونهم في زمن رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - ويجاهدون معه ويصلون ويزكون ويحجون ويوحدون. وكذلك الذين قال الله فيهم: {قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ} {لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ} [التوبة: ٦٥، ٦٦]، فهؤلاء الذين صرح الله فيهم أنهم كفروا بعد إيمانهم وهم مع رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - في غزوة تبوك قالوا كلمة ذكروا أنهم قالوها على وجه المزح، فتأمل هذه الشبهة وهي قولهم تكفرون من المسلمين أناسا يشهدون أن (لا إله إلا الله) ويصلون ويصومون، ثم تأمل جوابها، فإنه من أنفع ما في هذه الأوراق. اهـ

Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab says in *Kashf ash-Shubuhah* (p. 22), after refuting those who claim that disbelief only occurs through denial, rejection, or ingratitude: "What then is the meaning of the chapter mentioned by scholars of every school of thought? The chapter on the ruling of the apostate, who is the Muslim who disbelieves after embracing Islam. They then mention numerous types, each of which constitutes disbelief and renders the man's life and wealth lawful (to be taken), even mentioning seemingly insignificant acts, such as a word uttered by the tongue without belief in the heart, or a word spoken in jest and play." It is also said: "Those about whom Allah said, '{They swear by Allah that they did not say [blasphemous]. But they had already spoken the word of disbelief and disbelieved after their [pretense of] Islam}' [At-Tawbah: 74]. Did you not hear that Allah declared them disbelievers for a word they uttered, even though they lived during the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and fought alongside him, prayed, paid the zakah, performed Hajj, and affirmed the Oneness of Allah? Similarly, those about whom Allah said, '{Say, "Was it Allah, and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking?"}' {Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief.}' [At-Tawbah: 65-66]. These are the ones about whom Allah explicitly stated that they disbelieved after their belief, even though they were with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during the Battle of Tabuk. They uttered a word, claiming they said it in jest. Reflect upon this doubt, which is their claim that you declare Muslims as disbelievers, people who testify that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah, pray, and fast. Then reflect upon its answer, for it is among the most beneficial things in these pages."

وقال في آخر رسالة كشف الشبهات: "عليك بفهم آيتين من كتاب الله أولا هما: قوله تعالى: {لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ} [التوبة: ٦٦]، فإذا تحققت أن بعض الصحابة الذين غزوا الروم مع الرسول - صلى الله عليه وسلم - كفروا بسبب كلمة

قالوها على وجه المزح واللعب تبين لك أن الذي يتكلم بالكفر أو يعمل به خوفاً من نقص مال أو جاه أو مداراة لأخذ أعظم ممن يتكلم بكلمة يمزح بها والآية الثانية: " قوله تعالى: { مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أَكْرَهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ } { ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ } [النحل ١٠٦ ، ١٠٧] . فلم يعذر الله هؤلاء إلا من أكره مع كون قلبه مطمئناً بالإيمان ، وأما غير هذا فقد كفر بعد إيمانه ، سواء فعله خوفاً أو مداراة أو مشحة بوطنه ، أو أهله ، أو عشيرته أو ماله ، أو فعله على وجه المزح ، أو لغير ذلك من الأغراض إلا المكره ، فالآية تدل على هذا من جهتين : الأولى قوله : { إِلَّا مَنْ أَكْرَهَ } [النحل : ١٠٦] ، فلم يستثن الله تعالى إلا المكره . ومعلوم أن الإنسان لا يكره إلا على الكلام أو الفعل . وأما عقيدة القلب فلا يكره عليها أحد . والثانية قوله تعالى : { ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ } [النحل ١٠٧] فصرح أن هذا الكفر والعذاب لم يكن بسبب الاعتقاد أو الجهل أو البغض للدين أو محبة الكفر ، وإنما سببه أن له في ذلك حظاً من حظوظ الدنيا فآثره على الدين . والله سبحانه وتعالى أعلم . " اهـ .

He said at the end of his treatise Kashf ash-Shubuhah: "You must understand two verses from the Book of Allah. The first is His saying: '**{Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief.}**' [At-Tawbah: 66]. Once you have ascertained that some companions who fought the Romans with the Messenger - peace and blessings be upon him - disbelieved because of a word they said jokingly. This shows you that whoever speaks disbelief or acts upon it out of fear of losing wealth, status, or to appease someone is worse than someone who speaks a word of disbelief jokingly.

The second verse is the saying of Allah Almighty: {Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief... except for one who is compelled while his heart is secure in faith. But those who [willingly] open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah, and for them is a great punishment. That is because they preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter.} [An-Nahl 16:106-107].

Allah did not excuse these people except for the one who was compelled while his heart remained secure in faith. As for anyone else, they have disbelieved after their belief, whether they did it out of fear, appeasement, love for their homeland, family, tribe, wealth, or did it jokingly, or for any other purpose except compulsion. The verse indicates this in two ways:

First, His saying: **{except for one who is compelled}** [An-Nahl 16:106]. Allah Almighty did not make an exception except for the one who was compelled. It is known that a person is only compelled to speak or act. As for the belief of the heart, no one can be compelled upon it.

Second, His saying: **{That is because they preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter.}** [An-Nahl 16:107]. He clarified that this disbelief and punishment were not due to conviction, ignorance, hatred of religion, or love of disbelief, but rather because they had a worldly gain in it, so they preferred it over religion. And Allah Almighty knows best. End quote.

وقال في نواقض الإسلام : السادس : من استهزأ بشيء من دين الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم أو ثوابه أو عقابه كفر ، والدليل قوله تعالى : { قُلْ أَلِلَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ } .

And he said in "Nawaqid al-Islam" (Nullifiers of Islam): The sixth: Whoever mocks anything from the religion of the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, or its rewards or punishments, has disbelieved. The evidence is the saying of Allah Almighty: **{Say, "Is it Allah and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking? Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief."}**

يقول حمد بن علي عتيق من رسالة الدفاع عن أهل السنة و الأتباع (ص ٤٨) : ردا على من زعم أنه لا يكون كافرا من تكلم بالكفر إلا إذا اعتقده وشرح له صدره وطابت به نفسه : " قاتلك الله يا بهيم إن كنت تزعم انه لا يكفر إلا من شرح بالكفر صدره فهل يقدر احد أن يكره أحدا على تغيير العقيدة وان يشرح صدره بالكفر وسوف نبين إن شاء الله أن الآية تدل على كفر من قال الكفر وفعله وان كان يبغضه في الباطن ما لم يكن مكرها ، وأما إذا انشرح صدره بالكفر وطابت نفسه به فذاك كافر مطلقا مكرها أو غير مكره . " اهـ

Hamad bin Ali Atiq, in his book "Defense of the People of Sunnah and the Followers" (p. 48), responds to those who claim that a person is not considered a disbeliever for uttering words of disbelief unless they believe it in their heart and find pleasure in it. **He says:**

"May Allah curse you, you beast! If you claim that only those who expand their chest with disbelief are disbelievers, then can anyone force another to change their inner belief and make them expand their chest with disbelief? We will explain, Allah willing, that the verse indicates the disbelief of whoever utters and acts upon disbelief, even if they despise it inwardly, as long as they are not being compelled. As for the one who finds pleasure in disbelief and their heart is content with it, then they are absolutely a disbeliever, whether compelled or not."

Furthermore, Allah says about the polytheists of Quraysh:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ

"{..And those who take Auliya' (lords, protectors, helpers, allies) other than Him [say], "We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allah in position..." [Az-Zumar: 39:3].

Indeed, these people had good intentions in their own minds, which was to draw closer to Allah. However, this did not excuse them before Allah. Rather, Allah says about them afterwards:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ

"{...Indeed, Allah will judge between them concerning that over which they differ. Indeed, Allah does not guide he who is a liar and [confirmed] disbeliever.}" [Az-Zumar: 39:3].

So he called them liars, even though they did not intend to lie as such in their minds, and called them disbelievers, even though they did not disbelief. Reflect upon this point and consider it carefully.

At times, the polytheists are compared to beasts that do not understand speech or comprehend, and they are even worse than that. Yet, this is not mentioned as an excuse for their polytheism:

An example of this is Allah's saying:

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً ۚ صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ

"The example of those who disbelieve is like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing except a call and a cry. Deaf, dumb, and blind - so they do not understand." (Al-Baqarah: 2:171)

فعن ابن عباس في قوله { ومثل الذين كفروا كمثل الذي ينعق بما لا يسمع } قال : كمثل البقر والحمار والشاة ، إن قلت لبعضهم كلاماً لم يعلم ما تقول غير أنه يسمع صوتك ، وكذلك الكافر إن أمرته بخير أو نهيته عن شر أو وعظته لم يعقل ما تقول غير أنه يسمع صوتك .

Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him), commenting on the verse "**The example of those who disbelieve is like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing...**", said: "Like cattle, donkeys, and sheep. If you were to speak to them, they would not understand what you say, except that it is your voice. Similarly, if you command a disbeliever to do good, forbid them from evil, or advise them, they will not comprehend what you say, except that they hear your voice."

وفي رواية عنه قال : مثل الدابة تنادي فتسمع ولا تعقل ما يقال لها ، كذلك الكافر يسمع الصوت ولا يعقل ."

In another narration from him (Ibn Abbas, May Allah be pleased with him), he said: "Like a beast that you call to, it hears but does not understand what is being said to it. Similarly, the disbeliever hears the sound but does not comprehend."

وأخرج الطستى عن ابن عباس . أن نافع بن الأزرق قال له : أخبرني عن قوله عز وجل { كمثل الذي ينعق بما لا يسمع } قال : شبه الله أصوات المنافقين والكفار بأصوات البهم ، أي بأنهم لا يعقلون .

At-Tustari (May Allah have mercy upon him) narrated from **Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him)** that Nafi' ibn al-Azraq asked him: "Tell me about the saying of Allah, the Exalted, '**Like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing...**'" He said: "Allah likened the voices of the hypocrites and disbelievers to the voices of beasts, meaning that they do not understand."

وأخرج عبد بن حميد عن مجاهد في قوله { كمثل الذي ينعق } قال : الراعي { بما لا يسمع } قال البهائم {إلا دعاء ونداء} قال كمثل البعير والشاة تسمع الصوت ولا تعقل.

Abd bin Humayd (May Allah have mercy upon him) narrated from **Mujahid (May Allah have mercy upon him)** regarding the verse "Like that of one who shouts...", he said: "The shepherd [at what hears nothing] - he said the beasts [except a call and a cry] - he said like a camel and a sheep, they hear the sound but do not understand."

وأخرج وكيع عن عكرمة في قوله { ينعق بما لا يسمع إلا دعاء ونداء } مثل الكافر مثل البهيمة تسمع الصوت ولا تعقل " اهـ [أنظر هذه الآثار في الدر المنثور (١/٣٣٦)]

Wakee' (May Allah have mercy upon him) narrated from **Ikrimah (May Allah have mercy upon him)** regarding the verse "shouts at what hears nothing but a call and a cry": "The example of the disbeliever is like that of a beast, they hear the sound but do not understand." [See these narrations in Ad-Durr al-Manthur (1/336)]

Among the verses illustrating this point is Allah's saying:

وَلَقَدْ دَرَأْنَا لَجَنَّهُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

"And We have certainly created for Hellfire many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and

they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless." (Al-A'raf: 7:179)

وأخرج الطبري عن مجاهد في قوله { ولقد ذرأنا لجهنم } قال : لقد خلقنا لجهنم { لهم قلوب لا يفقهون بها } قال : لا يفقهون شيئاً من أمر الآخرة { ولهم أعين لا يبصرون بها } الهدى { ولهم أذان لا يسمعون بها } الحق ، ثم جعلهم كالأنعام ، ثم جعلهم شراً من الأنعام فقال { بل هم أضل } ثم أخبر أنهم الغافلون . والله أعلم .

Al-Tabari narrated from Mujahid (May Allah have mercy upon him) regarding the verse "**And We have certainly created for Hellfire...**": "We have created for Hellfire {**They have hearts with which they do not understand**} - he said: they do not understand anything of the matters of the Hereafter. {**And they have eyes with which they do not see**} - guidance. {**And they have ears with which they do not hear**} - the truth. Then He made them like livestock, then He made them worse than livestock, so He said: {**rather, they are more astray**}. Then He informed that they are the heedless. And Allah knows best."

Among the verses illustrating this point is also Allah's saying:

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنَّ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

"Then do you think that most of them hear or reason? They are not except like livestock. Rather, they are [even] further astray in deviation." (Al-Furqan 25:44)

And His saying:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَهُمْ

"Indeed, Allah will admit those who have believed and done righteous deeds to gardens beneath which rivers flow, but those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as grazing livestock eat, and the Fire will be a residence for them." (Muhammad: 47:12)

[I say]: All of this indicates that ignorance does not excuse one before Allah, even if it reaches its highest degree, descending to the level of beasts, where a state of ignorance, lack of understanding, knowledge, and complete absence of reason cannot be imagined beyond it.

At times, Allah denies the existence of any means of knowledge for the polytheists:

Such as negating their intellect, which is the tool of understanding, as well as their hearing and sight, which are the two doors through which knowledge is conceived. Despite all of this obstruction, He does not excuse them.

As Allah says:

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنَّ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

"Then do you think that most of them hear or reason? They are not except like livestock. Rather, they are [even] further astray in deviation." (Al-Furqan 25:44)

And His saying:

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

"And they will say, "If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze." (Al-Mulk: 67:10)

And His saying:

وَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءٌ وَنِدَاءٌ صُمُّ بِكُمْ عَمِيَ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

"Deaf, dumb, and blind - so they do not understand." (Al-Baqarah: 2:171)

روى ابن أبي حاتم عن ابن عباس قال : عن ابن عباس صم بكم عمي يقول : لا يسمعون الهدى ، ولا يبصرونه ولا يعقلونه .

Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him), who said: "Deaf, dumb, and blind - meaning they do not hear guidance, nor do they see it, nor do they understand it."

وعن قتادة قال : " صم عن الحق فهم لا يسمعون ، بكم عنه فهم لا ينطقون به ، عمي عنه فهم لا يبصرونه ."

And from Qatadah (May Allah have mercy upon him), who said: "Deaf to the truth, so they do not hear it. Dumb to it, so they do not speak it. Blind to it, so they do not see it."

قال في مفتاح دار السعادة (١/٥٩) : " إن الله تعالى وصف أهل النار بالجهل وأخبر أنه سد عليهم طرق العلم فقال تعالى حكاية عنهم : " وقالوا لو كنا نسمع أو نعقل ما كنا في أصحاب السعير فاعترفوا بذنبهم فسحقا لأصحاب السعير " فأخبروا أنهم كانوا لا يسمعون ولا يعقلون والسمع والعقل هما أصل العلم وبهما ينال وقال تعالى : " ولقد ذرأنا لجهنم كثيرا من الجن والإنس لهم قلوب لا يفقهون بها ولهم أعين لا يبصرون بها ولهم أذان لا يسمعون بها أولئك كالأنعام بل هم أضل أولئك هم الغافلون " فأخبر سبحانه أنهم لم يحصل لهم علم من جهة من جهات العلم الثلاث وهي العقل والسمع والبصر كما قال في موضع آخر : " صم بكم عمي فهم لا يعقلون " وقال تعالى : " أفلم يسيروا في الأرض فتكون لهم قلوب يعقلون بها أو آذان يسمعون بها فإنها لا تعمى الأبصار ولكن تعمى القلوب التي في الصدور وقال تعالى : وجعلناهم سمعا وأبصارا وأفئدة فما أغنى عنهم سمعهم ولا أبصارهم ولا أفئدتهم من شيء إذ كانوا يجحدون بآيات الله وحاق بهم ما كانوا به يستهزئون " فقد وصف أهل الشقاء كما ترى بعدم العلم وشبههم بالأنعام تارة وتارة بالحمير الذي يحمل الأسفار وتارة جعلهم أضل من الأنعام وتارة جعلهم شر الدواب عنده وتارة جعلهم أمواتا غير أحياء وتارة أخبر أنهم في ظلمات الجهل والضلال وتارة أخبر إن على قلوبهم أكنة وفي آذانهم وقرا وعلى أبصارهم غشاوة وهذا كله يدل على قبح الجهل ودم أهله وبغضه لهم كما انه يحب أهل العلم ويمدحهم ويثنى عليهم كما تقدم والله المستعان ."

Ibn al-Qayyim said in "Miftah Dar As-Sa'adah" (1/59): "Allah, the Exalted, described the people of Hellfire with ignorance and informed that He has blocked the paths of knowledge for them. He said, narrating from them: 'And they will say, "If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze."' So they admitted their sin. So, away with the companions of the Blaze! They informed that they did not listen nor reason, and hearing and reasoning are the basis of knowledge and through them, it is attained. And Allah said: 'And We have certainly created for Hellfire many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless.' So, the Exalted informed that they did not attain knowledge from any of the three sources of knowledge, which are the intellect, hearing, and

sight, as He said in another place: **"Deaf, dumb, and blind - so they do not understand."** And Allah, the Exalted, said: **"Have they not traveled through the land, and their hearts should reason, and their ears should listen? Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts."** And He said: **"And We had made for them hearing, and seeing, and hearts. But their hearing, seeing, and their hearts availed them nothing since they used to deny the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah, and what they used to mock at encompassed them."** So, as you see, He described the people of misery with lack of knowledge and likened them to cattle at times, and at times to a donkey carrying loads. He also described them as being more astray than cattle, and at times as the worst of creatures in His sight. He also described them as dead, not alive, and at times He informed that they are in the darkness of ignorance and misguidance. He also informed that there are coverings over their hearts and deafness in their ears and a covering over their sight. All of this indicates the ugliness of ignorance and the condemnation and hatred He has for its people, just as He loves the people of knowledge, praises them, and commends them, as has been stated previously. And Allah is the One sought for help.

At times, the Exalted mentions that the polytheists, in their state of disbelief, are in a stupor resembling intoxication, which indicates that it is more becoming to not excuse a polytheist due to ignorance:

His saying:

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَالٌ مِّنْ دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَمَلُونَ

"Rather, their hearts are covered with delusion over this, and they have [evil] deeds besides that [i.e., disbelief] which they are doing," (Al-Mu'minun: 23:63)

And His saying:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ

"[They will be] those who are in a stupor, [totally] unaware." (Adh-Dhariyat: 11)

And He also said about their state of intoxication:

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

"By your life, indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly." (Al-Hijr: 72)

أخرج الطبري وابن أبي حاتم ، عن قتادة في قوله { إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ } أي في ضلالتهم يلعبون

Al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated from Qatadah (May Allah be pleased with him) regarding the verse "Indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly": "Meaning, in their misguidance, they are playing."

وعن الأعمش أنه سئل عن قوله تعالى { لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ } قال : لفي غفلتهم يترددون .

And from Al-A'mash (May Allah be pleased with him), that he was asked about the saying of Allah, the Exalted: **"By your life, indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly."** He said: "In their heedlessness, they are doubting."

قال الطبري : " قوله (لَعَمْرُكَ) يقول تعالى لنبيه محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم: وحياتك يا محمد، إن قومك من قريش (لفي سَكَرَتِهِمْ يَغْمَهُونَ) يقول : لفي ضلالتهم وجهلهم يترددون. [جامع البيان (١٧/١٨)]

Al-Tabari said: "His saying (By your life) - Allah, the Exalted, says to His Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him: By your life, O Muhammad, your people from Quraysh **(are in their intoxication, wandering blindly)**. It is said: They are in their misguidance and ignorance, dounting. [Jami' al-Bayan (118/17)]

وقال ابن القيم في الجواب الكافي (ص ١٢٦) : " فوصفهم بالسكرة التي هي فساد العقل وعمه الذي هو فساد البصر فالتعلق بالصور يوجب فساد العقل وعمه البصيرة يسكر القلب . " اهـ

Ibn al-Qayyim said in "Al-Jawab al-Kafi" (p. 126): "They are described as being intoxicated, which is a corruption of the mind, and blind, which is a corruption of sight. Attachment to images lead to the corruption of the mind and blindness of insight, intoxicating the heart."

وقال في روضة المحبين (ص ١٤٨) : " أن سكر العشق أعظم من سكر الخمر كما قال الله تعالى عن عشاق الصور من قوم لوط لعمر ك إنهم لفي سكرتهم يعمهون وإذا كان أدنى السكرين لا يعذر صاحبه إذا تعاطى أسبابه فكيف يعذر صاحب السكر الأقوى مع تعاطي أسبابه . " اهـ

He also said in "Rawdat al-Muhibbin" (p. 148): "The intoxication of love is greater than the intoxication of wine, as Allah said about the idolaters from the people of Lot, 'By your life, indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly.' **If even the lesser intoxication doesn't excuse someone when they indulge in its causes, how can someone be excused for the greater intoxication when they indulge in its causes?**"

[I said]: Therefore, you see that intoxication is not considered an excuse for someone who associates partners with their Lord, as Ibn al-Qayyim mentioned, and this is clear from the Quranic verses. This is because the polytheists indulged in the causes of this intoxication and this blindness. The same goes for ignorance; it is even more fitting.

At times, Allah describes the polytheists as having forgotten the matter of monotheism and that He punished them for this forgetting and did not excuse them for it:

However, Allah excuses those who forget other auditory matters for a justifiable excuse:

He said:

فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"And because they broke their covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They distort the meaning of words from their proper places, and they have forgotten a part of that which they were reminded of. And you will never cease to find treachery from them, except for a few of them. So pardon them and overlook them. Indeed, Allah loves the doers of good." [Al-Ma'idah 5:13]

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرُوكَ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَأَعَزَّ بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ

"And among those who say, 'We are Christians,' We took their covenant, but they forgot a part of that which they were reminded of. So We stirred up animosity and hatred among them until the Day of Resurrection. And Allah will inform them of what they used to do." [Al-Ma'idah 5:14]

He also said:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ

"So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair." [Al-An'am 6:44]

And the Exalted said:

الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا وَلَعِبًا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فَالْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاهُمْ كَمَا نَسُوا لِقَاءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ

"Those who took their religion as amusement and diversion and whom worldly life deluded - so today We will forget them just as they forgot the meeting of this Day of theirs and [just as] they used to deny Our verses." [Al-A'raf 7:51]

And the Exalted said:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ أَنْجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيسٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

"So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We saved those who had forbidden evil and seized those who wronged, with a wretched punishment, for what they were accustomed to do." [Al-A'raf 7:165]

And He said:

الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"The hypocrites, men and women, are of one another. They enjoin what is wrong and forbid what is right and close their hands [from spending]. They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them [i.e., ceased to mention them with His remembrance]. Indeed, the hypocrites - it is they who are the defiantly disobedient." [At-Tawbah 9:67]

And He said:

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ مَا كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لَنَا أَنْ نَتَّخِذَ مِنْ دُونِكَ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَكِنْ مَتَّعْتَهُمْ وَعِبَاءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَسُوا الذِّكْرَ وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا بُورًا

"They will say, 'Exalted are You! It was not for us to take besides You any Auliya' (lords, protectors, helpers, allies). But You provided comforts for them and their fathers until they forgot the remembrance, and they were a destroyed people.'" [Al-Furqan 25:18]

And He also said in Surah Sad [38:26]:

يَا دَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ

"[We said], 'O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people with truth and do not follow [your own] desire, for it will mislead you from the way of Allah. Indeed, those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment for having forgotten the Day of Account.'"

And He also said:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. Those are the defiantly disobedient." [Al-Hashr 59:19]

[I said]: These verses and many others indicate that forgetting important matters - such as monotheism, the Hereafter, and other fundamentals of religion - is not considered an excuse before Allah, even though He said:

لَا يُكَفِّرُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وَسَعَهَا ۖ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن نَّسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ

"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned. 'Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we forget or err.'" [Al-Baqarah 2:286]

If you are intelligent, you would know what is the forgotten thing that Allah excuses people for in this verse, and what is the thing He does not excuse them for there? And you would know that the Messengers were sent to remind those who have forgotten about the matter of monotheism that they have neglected, not to establish proof against them, because the proof was already established before their coming to them.

All of this indicates that if forgetting is not considered an excuse for polytheism, then ignorance is even less likely to be considered an excuse. And if you understand that this forgetting is due to their turning away from the truth and not for any other reason, you would understand why they are not excused for it.

قال الطبري في قوله تعالى : { وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ } : عن سفيان : (نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ) قال : نَسُوا حق الله، فأنساهم أنفسهم قال: حظ أنفسهم وقوله : (أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ) يقول جل ثناؤه : هؤلاء الذين نسوا الله، هم الفاسقون، يعني الخارجون من طاعة الله إلى معصيته . " اهـ

Al-Tabari said in his explanation of the verse, "**And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves**": Sufyan (May Allah be pleased with him) said, "**They forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves.**" He said, "They forgot the right of Allah, so He made them forget themselves," meaning their own benefit. And His saying, "**Those are the defiantly disobedient**", the Exalted means: These who forgot Allah are the defiantly disobedient, meaning those who left the obedience of Allah for His disobedience.

وقال ابن القيم في الجواب الكافي (ص ٧١ - ٧٢) : فصل ومن عقوباتها أنها تنسى العبد نفسه فإذا نسي نفسه أهملها وأفسدها وأهلكها : " فان قيل كيف ينسى نفسه وإذا نسي العبد نفسه فإى شيء يذكره وما يعني نسيانه نفسه قيل نعم ينسى نفسه أعظم

نسيان قال تعالى (ولا تكونوا كالذين نسوا الله فأنساهم أنفسهم أولئك هم الفاسقون) فلما نسوا ربهم سبحانه نسيهم وأنساهم أنفسهم كما قال تعالى نسوا الله فنسيهم فعاقب سبحانه من نسيه عقوبتين أحدهما أنه سبحانه نسيه والثانية أنه أنساه نفسه ونسيانه سبحانه للعبد إهماله وتركه وتخليه عنه وإضاعته ونسيانه فالحال الذي أدنى إليه من اليد للفم وأما إنساؤه نفسه فهو إنساؤه لحظوظها العالية وأسباب سعادتها وفلاحها وإصلاحها وما يكملها بنسيه ذلك كله جميعه فلا يخطر بباله ولا يجعله على ذكره ولا يصرف إليه همته فيرغب فيه فانه لا يمر بباله حتي يقصده ويؤثره وأيضاً فينسيه عيوب نفسه ونقصها وأفاتها فلا يخطر بباله إزالتها وإصلاحها وأيضاً فينسيه أمراض نفسه وقلبه وآلامها فلا يخطر بقلبه مداواتها ولا السعى في إزالة عللها وأمراضها التي تؤول بها إلى الفساد والهلاك فهو مريض مثخن بالمرض ومرضه مترام به إلى التلف ولا يشعر بمرضه ولا يخطر بباله مداواته وهذا من أعظم العقوبة للعامة والخاصة فاي عقوبة أعظم من عقوبة من أهمل نفسه وضيعها ونسي مصالحها وداءها ودواءها وأسباب سعادتها وصالحاتها وفلاحها وحياتها الابدية في النعيم المقيم ومن تأمل هذا الموضع تبين له أن أكثر هذا الخلق قد نسوا أنفسهم حقيقة وضيعوها وأضاعوا حظها من الله وباعوها رخيصة بثمن بخس بيع الغبن وإنما يظهر لهم هذا عند الموت ويظهر كل الظهور يوم التغابن يوم يظهر للعبد أنه غبن في العقد الذي عقده لنفسه في هذه الدار والتجارة التي أضر فيها لمعاده . " اهـ

Ibn al-Qayyim said in "Al-Jawab al-Kafi" (p. 71-72), Section: "And among its punishments is that it makes the servant forget himself. So when he forgets himself, he neglects, corrupts, and destroys it." If it is said: How can the servant forget himself? And if he forgets himself, then what will remind him? And what is meant by forgetting himself? It is said: Yes, he forgets himself the greatest forgetting. Allah, the Exalted, said: **"And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. Those are the defiantly disobedient."** So when they forgot their Lord, the Exalted, He forgot them and made them forget themselves, as the Exalted said: "They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them." **So the Exalted punished the one who forgot Him with two punishments: The first is that He, the Exalted, forgot him, and the second is that He made him forget himself.**

And His forgetting, the Exalted, of the servant is His neglecting him, leaving him, abandoning him, and wasting him, and forgetting him. Thus, destruction is closer to him than the hand is to the mouth. As for him forgetting himself, it is forgetting his noble goals, the reasons for his happiness, success, reform, and what completes him. By forgetting all of that, it does not cross his mind, nor does he remember it, nor does he pay attention to it. It does not even occur to him until he seeks it and is affected by it. And also, he forgets his own flaws, shortcomings, and defects, so it does not cross his mind to remove them or correct them. And also, he forgets his own illnesses, the diseases of his heart, and their pains, so it does not cross his heart to treat them or to strive to remove their causes and diseases that lead to corruption and destruction. So he is a sick person, afflicted with disease, and his disease is leading him to ruin, but he does not feel his disease, nor does it cross his mind to treat it. And this is from the greatest of punishment[s] for both the common people and the elite, what punishment is greater than the punishment of one who neglects himself and wastes his life, forgets his own interests, his ailments and their cures, the reasons for his happiness and righteousness, his success and his eternal life in everlasting bliss? Whoever contemplates this matter will realize that most of creation have truly forgotten themselves and wasted their lives. They have squandered their share of Allah's bounty and sold it cheaply for a paltry price, a sale of utter loss. This will become clear to them only at the time of death, and everything will be exposed on the Day of Regret. On that day, it will become clear to the servant that he made a terrible deal for himself in this world and in the trade he engaged in for his Hereafter." End quote.

[I said]: So you see that this type of forgetfulness is merely a punishment from Allah upon this group of forgetful people. It is not appropriate to consider it an excuse that could be argued in defense of those polytheists. In reality, it is an argument against them and a punishment from Allah upon them?

At times, the Quran states that a condition for the validity of Tawheed (oneness of Allah) is knowledge of its meaning and implications. This indicates that ignorance of it is not beneficial:

As Allah says:

فَالَّذِينَ لَا يَجِيبُونَ لَكُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أُنْزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

"{If they do not respond to you - then know that it has been revealed with the knowledge of Allah, and that there is no deity except Him, so will you be Muslims [then]?}" [Hud 11:14]

He also said in this regard:

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ

"{So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah and ask for forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and believing women. And Allah knows of your movements and your resting place.}" [Muhammad 47:19]

قال الطبري في تفسير الآية السابقة: "وقوله: {إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ} وشهادته بالحق: هو إقراره بتوحيد الله، حقيقة توحيدة." اهـ

Al-Tabari said in his interpretation of the previous verse: "And His saying: {Except for those who bear witness to the truth, while they know.} His bearing witness to the truth is his affirmation of the Oneness of Allah, He means by that: Except for those who believe in Allah, while they know the reality of His Oneness." End quote.

وقال عبد الرحمن بن حسن في شرحه على كتاب التوحيد: قوله: من شهد أن لا إله إلا الله (أي: من تكلم بها عارفاً لمعناها، عاملاً بمقتضاها، باطناً وظاهراً، فلا بد في الشهادتين من العلم واليقين والعمل بمدلولهما، كما قال الله تعالى: {فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ} [محمد: ١٩]. وقوله: {إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ} [الزخرف: ٨٦]. أما النطق بها من غير معرفة لمعناها ولا يقين ولا عمل بما تقتضيه: من البراءة من الشرك، وإخلاص القول والعمل: قول القلب واللسان وعمل القلب والجوارح فغير نافع بالإجماع «فتح المجيد (٣٩ - ٤١)»

Abdur-Rahman bin Hasan said in his explanation of the Book of Tawheed: "His saying: 'Whoever bears witness that there is no deity except Allah' (means) whoever utters it with knowledge of its meaning, acting upon its requirements, both inwardly and outwardly. Therefore, it is necessary that the two testimonies (of faith) require knowledge, certainty, and acting upon their implications, as Allah Almighty said: {So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah} [Muhammad: 19]. And He said: {Except for those who bear witness to the truth, while they know} [Az-Zukhruf: 86]. As for uttering it without knowing its meaning, nor having certainty, nor acting upon its requirements - which are disavowing shirk (polytheism), sincerity in word and deed, both in the heart and on the tongue, and actions of both

the heart and limbs - it is of no benefit according to scholarly consensus." [Fath al-Majid (39-41)]

وقال أيضا : « إن التهليل إذا صدر من المشرِك، حال استمراره على شركه غير معتبر، فوجوده كعدمه، وإنما ينفع إذا قاله : عالما بمعناه ملتزمًا لمقتضاه كما قال تعالى: { إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ } [الزخرف: ٨٦] . قال الطبري كغيره : وهم يعلمون حقيقة ما شهدوا به » اهـ | «مجموعة الرسائل والمسائل النجدية»: (٢/١٢، ١٣) [

He also said: "Indeed, the declaration of Tawheed (La ilaha illallah), when uttered by a polytheist while persisting in his polytheism, is not considered valid. Its existence is like its non-existence. It only benefits when said with knowledge of its meaning and adherence to its implications, as Allah Almighty said: **{Except for those who bear witness to the truth, while they know}** [Az-Zukhruf: 86]. Al-Tabari, like others, said: 'And they know the reality of what they bear witness to.'" End quote. ["Majmu'at ar-Rasail wal-Masa'il an-Najdiyyah": (2/12-13)]

وقال : " فلا تنفع هذه الكلمة قائلها إلا بهذه القيود إذا اجتمعت له، مع العلم بمعناها ومضمونها كما قال -تعالى-: { وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ } . وقال تعالى لنبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم : { فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، فمعناها يقبل الزيادة لقوة العلم، وصلاح العمل. فلا بد من العلم بحقيقة معنى هذه الكلمة علما ينافي الجهل، بخلاف من يقولها وهو لا يعرف معناها. ولا بد من اليقين المنافي للشك فيما دلت عليه من التوحيد ولا بد من الإخلاص المنافي للشرك؛ فإن كثيرا من الناس يقولها وهو يشرك في العبادة، وينكر معناها، ويعادي من اعتقده وعمل به، ولا بد من الصدق المنافي للكذب، بخلاف حال المنافق الذي يقولها من غير صدق، كما قال تعالى { يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ } . اهـ [مجموع فتاوى عبد الرحمن بن حسن (١/٢٨)]

And he said: "Therefore, this statement will not benefit its speaker except with these conditions, if they are combined with knowledge of its meaning and content, as Allah Almighty said: **{And those they invoke other than Him do not possess [power of] intercession - except [for] whoever has borne witness to the truth, and they know}**."

And Allah Almighty said to His Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him: {So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah}, so its meaning accepts increase due to the strength of knowledge and righteousness of action. **Therefore, knowledge of the true meaning of this statement is necessary, a knowledge that contradicts ignorance,** unlike one who utters it without knowing its meaning. And certainty is necessary, which contradicts doubt in what it indicates of Tawheed. And sincerity is necessary, which contradicts shirk, for many people utter it while associating partners in worship, denying its meaning, and commit polytheism in worship, and deny its meaning. And truthfulness is necessary, which contradicts falsehood, unlike the state of the hypocrite who utters it without sincerity, as Allah Almighty said: **{They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts}**." End quote. [Majmu' Fatawa Abdur-Rahman bin Hasan (28/1)]

وقال سليمان بن عبد الله : « قوله (من شهد أن لا إله إلا الله)، أي: من تكلم بهذه الكلمة عارفاً معناها، عاملاً بمقتضاها باطنا وظاهراً، كما دلَّ عليه قوله : { فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ } [محمد : ١٩] وقوله : { إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ } [الزخرف: ٨٦] . أما النطق بها من غير معرفة لمعناها ولا عمل بمقتضاها، فإن ذلك غير نافع بالإجماع. وفي الحديث ما يدل على هذا، وهو قوله: «من شهد» إذ كيف يشهد وهو لا يعلم، ومجرد النطق بشيء لا يسمى شهادة به . " اهـ [« تيسير العزيز الحميد »: (٥١ - ٥٣) .]

Sulayman ibn Abdullah said: "His saying (whoever bears witness that there is no deity except Allah) means whoever utters this statement knowing its meaning and acting upon its requirements, both inwardly and outwardly, as indicated by His saying: **{So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah}** [Muhammad: 19] and His saying: **{Except for those who bear witness to the truth, while they know}** [Az-Zukhruf: 86]. As for uttering it without knowing its meaning or acting upon its requirements, it is of no benefit according to scholarly consensus. There is evidence for this in the hadith, which is his saying: **'Whoever bears witness,'** for how can one bear witness without knowing? Merely uttering something does not qualify as bearing witness to it." End quote. ["Taysir al-Aziz al-Hamid": (51-53)].

وقال محمد ابن عبد الوهاب في رسالته " الواجبات المحتمات (ص ٢) : " أدلة هذه الشروط من كتاب الله تعالى ومن سنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : دليل العلم : قوله تعالى : { فأعلم أنه لا إله إلا الله } وقوله : { إلا من شهد بالحق وهم يعلمون } أي بـ " لا إله إلا الله " { وهم يعلمون } بقلوبهم ما نطقوا به بالسنتهم ومن السنة : الحديث الثابت في الصحيح عن عثمان رضي الله عنه قال : (قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " من مات وهو يعلم أنه لا إله إلا الله دخل الجنة " . اهـ

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab said in his treatise "al-Wajibat al-Muhtamat" (p. 2): "The evidence for these conditions is from the Book of Allah Almighty and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him. The evidence for knowledge is His saying: **{So know that there is no deity except Allah}** and His saying: **{Except for those who bear witness to the truth, while they know}**, meaning: of "La ilaha illallah" **{and they know}** with their hearts what they utter with their tongues. And from the Sunnah: the authentic hadith narrated by Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: 'The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: **"Whoever dies knowing that there is no deity except Allah will enter Paradise."** End quote.

وقال أبو بطين في كتابه الإنتصار (ص ١٧) : قال تعالى : { وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ } قال المفسرون : إلا من شهد بلا إله إلا الله وهم يعلمون بقلوبهم ما شهدوا به بالسنتهم ، وقد قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم : " من مات وهو يعلم أن لا إله إلا الله دخل الجنة " [أخرجه مسلم رقم ٢٦] واستدل العلماء بهذه الآيات ونحوها : على أن أول واجب على الإنسان معرفة الله. ودلت هذه الآيات : على أن أكد الفرائض العلم بمعنى لا إله إلا الله ، وأن أعظم الجهل نقص العلم بمعناها، إذ كان معرفة معناها أكد الواجبات، فالجهل بذلك أعظم الجهل وأقبحه . ومن العجب أن بعض الناس إذا سمع من يتكلم في معنى هذه الكلمة نفيا وإثباتا، عاب ذلك، وقال: لسا مكلفين بالناس والقول فيهم فيقال له : بل أنت مكلف بمعرفة التوحيد الذي خلق الله الجن والإنس لأجله، وأرسل جميع الرسل يدعون إليه، ومعرفة ضده وهو الشرك الذي لا يغفر ، ولا عذر لمكلف في الجهل بذلك ولا يجوز فيه التقليد ، لأنه أصل الأصول ، فمن لم يعرف المعروف وينكر المنكر فهو هالك، لاسيما أعظم المعروف وهو التوحيد، وأكبر المنكرات وهو الشرك . قال رجل لعبد الله بن مسعود الله عنه رضي هلكت إن لم آمر بالمعروف وأنه عن المنكر ! فقال ابن مسعود: هلكت إن لم يعرف قلبك المعروف وينكر المنكر . " اهـ

Abu Butayn said in his book "Al-Intisar" (p. 17): "Allah Almighty said: **{And those they invoke other than Him do not possess [power of] intercession - except [for] whoever has borne witness to the truth, and they know}**. The exegetes said: 'Except for those who bear witness that there is no deity except Allah while knowing with their hearts what they bear witness to with their tongues.' And the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: **'Whoever dies knowing that there is no deity except Allah will enter Paradise.'** [Narrated by Muslim, no. 26]. The scholars used these verses and others like them as evidence that the first obligation upon a person is to know Allah. These verses indicate that the most emphasized of the obligatory duties is knowledge of the meaning of La ilaha illallah, and that the greatest ignorance

is the lack of knowledge of its meaning. Since knowing its meaning is the most emphasized of the obligations, then ignorance of it is the greatest and most reprehensible ignorance. And it is astonishing that some people, upon hearing someone speak about the meaning of this statement (La ilaha illallah) in terms of negation and affirmation, criticize it and say: "We are not responsible for people and speaking about them." It should be said to them: "Indeed, you are responsible for knowing Tawheed (Oneness of Allah), for which Allah created jinn and mankind, and to which He sent all the Messengers calling. You are also responsible for knowing its opposite, which is shirk (polytheism), which is unforgivable. **There is no excuse for anyone legally responsible to be ignorant of it, and imitation is not permissible in it, for it is the foundation of all foundations.** Whoever does not recognize good and forbid evil is doomed, especially regarding the greatest good, which is Tawheed, and the greatest evil, which is shirk." A man said to Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him: "I am doomed if I do not enjoin good and forbid evil!" Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him replied: "You are doomed if your heart does not recognize good and forbid evil." End quote.

[I said]: So you see that a condition for the validity of Tawheed is knowledge of the meaning of La ilaha illallah, both in negation and affirmation, and that the absence of knowledge of its meaning necessitates its rejection. This is by scholarly consensus, which indicates that ignorance of Tawheed is not a valid excuse.

At times, Allah Almighty narrates about His Prophets that they described their polytheistic people with utmost ignorance, both before and after the call (to Islam). Yet, they still called them disbelievers and did not consider ignorance a preventative from labeling them as such:

For example, Allah Almighty said:

قُلْ أَفَعَيِّرَ اللَّهَ تَأْمُرُونَنِي أَعْبُدُ أَيُّهَا الْجَاهِلُونَ

{Say, "Is it other than Allah that you order me to worship, O ignorant ones?"} [Az-Zumar: 39:64].

And Moses, peace be upon him, said to his people:

وَجَوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتَوْا عَلَى قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَى أَصْنَامٍ لَهُمْ قَالُوا يَمُوسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ

{And We took the Children of Israel across the sea, and they came upon a people devoted to some idols of theirs. They said, "O Moses, make for us a god just as they have gods." He said, "Indeed, you are a people ignorant."} [Al-A'raf 7:138].

And Noah, peace be upon him, said to his people:

وَيَقَوْمِ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَالًا إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُلَقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَلَكِنِّي أَرَىٰ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ

{And O my people, I ask not of you for it any wealth. My reward is not but from Allah. And I am not one to drive away those who have believed. Indeed, they are to meet their Lord, but I see that you are a people ignorant."} [Hud 11:29]

And Lot, peace be upon him, said to his polytheistic people:

أَنتُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ

{Do you indeed approach men with desire instead of women? Rather, you are a people ignorant.}
[An-Naml 27:55]

And Hud, peace be upon him, also said to his people:

قَالَ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَا أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ وَلَعِنَى أَرْسِلُكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ

{He said, "Indeed, knowledge is only with Allah, and I convey to you that with which I was sent, but I see that you are a people ignorant."} [Al-Ahqaf 46:23]

[I said]: These verses demonstrate that the disbelievers, even after the Messengers came to them and conveyed the message, remained in a state of ignorance and were described as such. So, can it be said that they are excused to the point that the label of "ignorant" is removed from them? What then do you do with the saying of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him: "**O Allah, guide my people, for they do not know**" ... O Allah, forgive them, O Allah, forgive them."

And lastly, this is a mercy from your Lord, a hundred verses or more, indicating the lack of excuse for ignorance in various ways, and I have left out many and only mentioned the clear ones. So, by Allah, will you abandon all these verses, with their clarity and explanation, and the sayings of the firmly grounded scholars regarding them, for one or two ambiguous verses that do not indicate any excuse for ignorance, neither directly nor indirectly? And listen to the saying of Allah Almighty: {**It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unclear. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unclear, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah. But those firm in knowledge say, "We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord."** And no one will be reminded except those of understanding.} [Al-Imran: 7] So what is there after truth except misguidance?

And All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Written by Abu Ubayd

Translated by

